

PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN

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(71)Applicant : FUJITSU LTD

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(72)Inventor : YOSHIOKA MAKOTO

TSUNODA HARUHIKO

HASEGAWA KAZU HARU

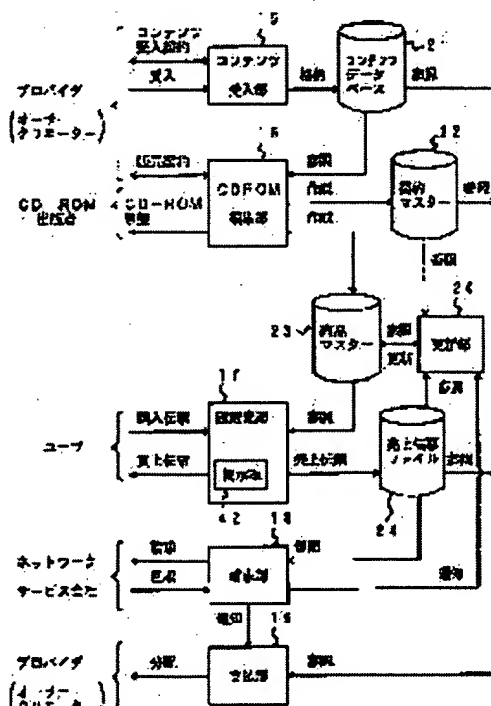
AOE HIDESHI

(54) SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR CHARGING CONTENT VENDING PRICE

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a content vending price charging system which can update the vending price of contents according to a vending period similarly to store vending at an ordinary retail store even in the case of a content distribution system which vends contents by giving a key for deciphering the ciphered contents.

SOLUTION: The vending prices and vending validity periods of respective contents are entered into an article master 23. Further, a contract master 22 contains whether or not each content can be reduced in vending price. A key vending part 17 charges content purchasers according to vending prices entered into the article master 23. An update part 20 compares the current date and time with vending validity periods in the article master 23 and reduces the vending prices entered into the article master 23 as to contents whose vending validity periods are less than one month only when the contract master 22 shows that their vending prices can be reduced.



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CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1] The 1st database which recorded the selling price and the subscription period which are a contents selling price accounting system in the contents negotiation system which sells contents, and were set up about each contents, When this time indicated at least to be the clock means which shows this time by said clock means is a predetermined period within said subscription period currently recorded on said 1st database The updating means of the price which adopts a different price from the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database, The contents selling price accounting system characterized by having an accounting means to charge the selling price of the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database, to those who purchased contents.

[Claim 2] Said updating means is a contents selling price accounting system according to claim 1 characterized by detecting that the sale total of the contents concerned is more than fixed numbers, and updating said selling price.

[Claim 3] Said updating means is a contents selling price accounting system according to claim 1 or 2 characterized by reducing the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database.

[Claim 4] It is the contents selling price accounting system according to claim 3 characterized also by for said updating means to make it the conditions for updating said selling price to indicate that abatement of the selling price of the contents concerned is possible for said abatement propriety information currently recorded on said 2nd database about the contents concerned while having further the 2nd database which recorded the abatement propriety information about the propriety of abatement of the selling price set up about each contents.

[Claim 5] Said updating means is a contents selling price accounting system according to claim 1 characterized by changing said selling price for every fixed period.

[Claim 6] Said updating means is a contents selling price accounting system according to claim 1 characterized by eliminating the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database in hitting after the last day of said subscription period when this time shown by said clock means is recorded on said 1st database.

[Claim 7] It is the contents selling price accounting approach in the contents negotiation system which sells contents. The selling price and the subscription period which were set up about each contents are beforehand recorded on the 1st database. About the contents which the subscription period of each contents and this time which are recorded on this 1st database are compared, and this time hits at the predetermined period within that subscription period The contents selling price accounting approach characterized by changing the selling price currently recorded on said 1st database, and charging this changed selling price at a contents purchaser.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Field of the Invention] This invention relates to the contents selling price accounting system and the accounting approach in the contents negotiation system which sells these contents by supplying those who wish purchasing of these contents with the key for compound-izing these contents while enciphering and distributing contents.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art] In recent years, the negotiation by the CD-ROM medium of the contents (software, such as a film, a music work, a computer program, and a database) which are digital information is briskly performed with the spread of CD-ROM drives. This is based on that it is the mass medium by which a CD-ROM medium can manufacture very cheaply, and exceeds 500MB, and the low price and improvement in the speed of a CD-ROM drive. Furthermore, CD-ROM is because the negotiation inserted into a journal as compared with the capacity since it is a lightweight thin shape is possible.

[0003] By the way, since the contents stored in this CD-ROM are digital data, they have risk of copying illegally and inaccurate installing easily (it being here and introducing contents into the disk unit of a personal computer system with "install"). Therefore, even if it faces the contents negotiation using CD-ROM, it is called for that such an illegal copy and unjust install can be prevented.

[0004] So, when circulating contents in CD-ROM, some kinds of the trial version contents and the enciphered genuine article contents are recorded on CD-ROM, and he circulates them, and was trying to teach conventionally the key for making these genuine article contents decrypt in exchange for dues payment (lump sum payment) of contents only to the user who wishes the activity of genuine article contents. In addition, in the following explanation, in order to talk intelligible, it is referred to as "Selling contents" to teach a key in exchange for dues payment of contents, and the thing of the dues of contents is called "selling price of contents."

[0005] In such a conventional contents negotiation system, the selling price of contents was always fixed.

[0006]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] however, in the case of the contents (namely, the text data of a journal or a newspaper -- like -- the music data of contents with important informational freshness, and a Christmas song, the video data of a Christmas film, and the image data of a New Year's card -- like -- the strong contents of season nature) to which the period in which mass-marketing by a certain amount of expensive rank is possible is limited naturally, for example, if a contents negotiation systems operation person or a contents provider wants to obtain the largest possible sales proceeds within the period, he will want. Also in the case of the contents to which the period when similarly the contents negotiation systems operation person is allowed to perform the sale is beforehand limited by the selling agreement, if a contents negotiation systems operation person wants to obtain the largest possible sales proceeds within the period permitted, he will want. Furthermore, since a quantity sold decreases extremely just before version up in being the contents by which version up is planned for every period of a certain amount of like a computer program, a contents negotiation systems operation person or a contents provider wants by lowering the selling price to ease reduction in a quantity sold.

[0007] It is made in order that this invention may meet the above demands. While distributing the contents in the condition of having been enciphered to said purchaser, even if it is the case of the contents negotiation system which sells these contents by supplying the purchaser who wishes purchasing of these contents with the key for decrypting these contents Let it be a technical problem to offer the contents selling price accounting system and the accounting approach of updating the selling price of contents according to a sale stage like the case of over-the-counter sales at the usual retail store.

[0008]

[Means for Solving the Problem] The following configurations were used for this invention in order to solve the above-mentioned technical problem. Namely, the contents selling price accounting system by this invention As shown in principle drawing of drawing 1, it is a contents selling price accounting system in the contents negotiation system which sells contents. The 1st database which recorded the selling price and the subscription period which were set up about each contents (102), When this time indicated at least to be the clock means (100) which shows this time by said clock means (100) is a predetermined period within said subscription period currently recorded on said 1st database (102) The updating means of the price which adopts a different price from the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database (102) (101), It is characterized by having an accounting means (103) to charge the selling price of the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database (102), to those who purchased contents (it corresponds to claim 1).

[0009] That is, according to the contents selling price accounting system by this invention, the selling price and the subscription period which were set up about each contents are recorded on the 1st database (102). Moreover, the clock means (100) shows this time. An updating means (101) updates the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database (102), when this time shown by said clock means (100) is a predetermined period within said subscription period currently recorded on said 1st database (102). An accounting means (103) charges selling price) after updating, when renewal of (is performed to those who purchased contents with the selling price of the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database (102).

[0010] Here, contents are software and video datas, such as a program, music data, and a film, are included. These contents may be analog format or may be digital formats.

[0011] the 1st database may be a single database physically and recorded the selling price or a subscription period, respectively -- you may be a separate database physically. A clock means should just show a current date at least.

[0012] An updating means may also detect that the sale total of the contents concerned is more than fixed numbers, and may update said selling price (it corresponds to claim 2). If it does in this way, even if the remainder of a subscription period is long, the rational selling price can be reset to the inelastic contents of a sales number, and the sales of these contents can be lengthened.

[0013] Moreover, you may make it an updating means reduce the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database (it corresponds to claim 3). Moreover, an updating means may be made to change said selling price for every fixed period (it corresponds to claim 5).

[0014] Moreover, an updating means may eliminate the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database, when hitting after the last day of said subscription period when this time shown by said clock means is recorded on said 1st database (it corresponds to claim 6).

Although such a thing is also an object for updating, since such a thing cannot already be sold, the capacity of the 1st database can be used effectively by deleting a publication.

[0015] The following configurations may be added to the contents selling price accounting system by this invention. That is, you may have further the 2nd database which recorded the abatement propriety information about the propriety of abatement of the selling price set up about each contents. In this case, said abatement propriety information that said updating means is recorded on said 2nd database about the contents concerned can also make it the conditions for updating said selling price to indicate that abatement of the selling price of the contents concerned is possible (it corresponds to claim 4). If it does in this way, since a contents provider can fix whether abatement of the selling price of the contents for an agreement is possible on the occasion of the selling agreement with a systems operation person, it will be prevented that the selling price of contents will be reduced against this contents provider's volition.

[0016] Moreover, the contents selling price accounting approach by this invention It is the contents selling price accounting approach in the contents negotiation system which sells contents. The selling price and the subscription period which were set up about each contents are beforehand recorded on the 1st database. About the contents which the subscription period of each contents and this time which are recorded on this 1st database are compared, and this time hits at the predetermined period within that

subscription period The selling price currently recorded on said 1st database is changed, and it is characterized by charging this changed price at a contents purchaser (it corresponds to claim 7).

[0017]

[Embodiment of the Invention] Below, the gestalt of operation of this invention is explained based on a drawing.

<Outline of contents negotiation system> drawing 2 is the block diagram showing the outline of a contents negotiation system in which this invention is carried out. In this drawing 2, the SD center 1 is equipment which takes the lead in a contents negotiation system. The employment person who employs this SD center 1 is also a manager using this contents negotiation system of a contents negotiation business. This SD center 1 distributes the part of the proceeds of an epilogue and the sold contents for a selling agreement to a provider 2 from a provider 2 to what selling among the contents which accepted and accepted those contents determined based on this contents acceptance agreement while contracting a contents acceptance agreement with the provider (provider) 2 of various contents. Moreover, by the case, the SD center 1 distributes the part of the proceeds while making a selling agreement also among the rightful claimants 3 of others other than provider 2. The SD center 1 performs edit which enciphers the contents which made the selling agreement and can be burned on original recording CD-ROM of one sheet. The navigator (program) which performs a series of processings for decrypting the enciphered contents on the occasion of this edit, and the installer for these navigators (program) can both also be burned. After performing such edit, the SD center 1 requests publication of this CD-ROM from the CD-ROM publisher 4.

[0018] The SD center 1 is connected to a user's 5 personal computer 6 through this network service firm 7 and public telephone network which is not illustrated while connecting with the network service firm 7 through the gateway 13. The SD center 1 transmits the key and purchase cut-form for decrypting the contents shown in the purchase cut-form corresponding to the purchase cut-form transmitted through the network service firm 7 from the personal computer 6 to a user's 5 personal computer through the network service firm 7. Moreover, the claim vicarious execution section 14 of the network service firm 7 is asked for the SD center 1, and it collects the prices of contents sold by doing in this way.

[0019] A provider 2 is usually the copyright person (author) of contents. Specifically, the independent copyright person about a certain contents (the work of the so-called primary work, a secondary work, and a film, edit work), all share copyright persons about a certain contents, all copyright persons about each component in a set work, etc. are mentioned. These persons are direct copyright persons (the so-called modern author) of the contents concerned, and unless a selling agreement is concluded among these persons, it is because the SD center 1 cannot sell the contents concerned. Each [these] provider 2 has unique ID (authoring ID), respectively.

[0020] The other rightful claimants 3 are third parties other than provider 2, and when those who have the access which can be directly asserted to the SD center 1 when the contents concerned are reproduced, and contents are reproduced, they are those who have the claims (claim of a run NINGURO spear tee etc.) which can be asserted to a provider 2. As a former example, the copyright person of each component in the copyright person (the so-called classic author) of a secondary work and the Hara work in the work of a film, the copyright person of the work used for the work of a film, the demonstration house in a music work, and an edit work is mentioned. Since the SD center 1 cannot reproduce the contents concerned without consent of these persons, it must conclude a selling agreement also among these persons. Moreover, those who are authors (creator) who are not a copyright person as a latter example, and exchanged agreements of run NINGURO spear tee payment on the occasion of the transfer of copyright among copyright persons (copyright person applicable to a provider 2 or the former) are mentioned. Since the SD center 1 does not need to conclude these persons and selling agreements, it does not have in principle the need of allotting these persons the proceeds of contents by direct, either. However, a provider 2 has to distribute the dividend distributed to self to these persons as a run NINGURO spear tee ex post. Therefore, if a part for these persons' picking is directly distributed from the SD center 1, a provider's 2 effort will be mitigated. Each of the rightful claimant 3 of these others also has unique ID (ID, such as a creator).

[0021] In the network service firm 7, while the project implementing body which offers network-data communication service, such as personal computer communications, is shown, the host computer is also shown. The network service firm 7 is connected through the public telephone network which is not illustrated according to the connection request from this personal computer 6 also to a user's 5 personal computer 6 registered as a member besides the SD center 1. And various services of the data exchange are performed between each connected personal computer 6 and the SD center 1. In addition, in order to register with this network service firm 7 as a member, a user 5 has to register into the network service firm 7 the number of the effective credit card which self has as an object for pulling [of the charge of service utilization] down.

[0022] Moreover, the claim vicarious execution section 14 of the network service firm 7 adds this claim amount of money to the charge of service utilization of the member user 5 who is a contents purchaser according to the claim of the contents price from the SD center 1. And the charge of service utilization to which the contents price was added is charged to the credit card company 8 to which this member user 5 registered that number into the network service firm 7. When the credit card company 8 has paid the charge of service utilization according to this claim, the network service firm 7 deducts the original charge of service utilization and an original predetermined commission, and pays the balance to the SD center 1.

[0023] A credit card company 8 charges directly the charge of service utilization charged from the claim vicarious execution section 14 to a user 5 (correctly a user's 5 bank account). The CD-ROM publisher 4 receives publication bailment of CD-ROM from the SD center 1, and reproduces original recording CD-ROM received from the SD center 1 to a large quantity. The CD-ROM publisher 4 sells to a user 5 CD-ROM11 which carried out in this way and was reproduced, or does free sending at the user 5 who is the registration member of the network service firm 6.

[0024] A user 5 loads CD-ROM11 which came to hand from the CD-ROM publisher 4 to the self personal computer 6. And the installer stored in CD-ROM11 is performed. Then, an installer generates a machine ID 50 according to generating of a random number etc., and writes this machine ID 50 in the hard disk 12 of a personal computer 6 while it installs a navigator 10 in the hard disk 12 of a personal computer 6. In addition, when the machine ID 50 is already generated in this hard disk 12, an installer does not generate the new machine ID 50.

[0025] If a navigator 10 is performed in a personal computer 6, a navigator 10 will generate the decode section 9. And a navigator 10 creates the purchase cut-form for contents purchase (text data) in which the user 5 did purchase hope while enabling trial of the trial version contents in CD-ROM11 according to the input from a user 5. Moreover, using the communications program which is not illustrated, it connects with the network service firm 7, and connects with the SD center 1 through the gateway 13 further, and the created purchase cut-form is transmitted to the SD center 1. In addition, ID (henceforth "user ID") of the access number generated from a CD-ROM number besides a CD-ROM number (unique for every class of each CD-ROM) and content ID (unique for every contents), content ID, and Machine ID and the user 5 concerned registered into the network service firm is written in this purchase cut-form. If the key (key for restoring to the enciphered contents) enciphered by this access number is returned from the SD center 1, with the access number currently recorded, a navigator 10 will decode a key and will pass it to the decode section 9. The decode section 9 reads the contents (enciphered contents) in which the user 5 is doing purchase hope from CD-ROM11, and compound-izes them using a key, and the compound-ized contents are stored in a hard disk 12.

Detailed internal configuration explanation of the SD center 1 is given using <the concrete configuration of the SD center 1>, next drawing 3 . In drawing 3 , the contents accession department 15 makes a contents acceptance agreement among providers 2. This is the agreement of the purport that consider as the preparation which will circulate the contents concerned through the contents negotiation system by the SD center 1 in the future, and the SD center 1 keeps the contents concerned. And the contents accession department 15 accepts contents as effectiveness of this contents acceptance conclusion of a contract. And ID (content ID) of the accepted contents is generated and the contents concerned are stored in the contents database 21 with this content ID. Moreover, the contents accession department 15

also stores the provider information about these contents in the contents database 21. Although this provider information is ID (authoring ID) of the provider (author) 2 who is a party with a contents acceptance agreement, and persons other than provider 2, a person's [need / the selling agreement of the contents concerned / to be concluded] ID and conclusion of a selling agreement of contents are ID of those who have the claim of a run NINGURO spear tee about the sale of the contents concerned to a provider 2, although it is unnecessary. ID of each [these] ** is stored hierarchical in the contents database 21 by using a provider's 2 ID (authoring ID) as the top layer. in addition, when the agreement for ** is between each [these] **, the information on each fixed ** which especially boils and is attached is also stored in the contents database 21 as provider information.

[0026] The example of this provider information is shown below. In addition, in each following example, the alphabet shows ID, such as a provider, and although a notation "*" requires an appropriate person, it is shown that the specification is not made. [Example 1]

[0027]

[A table 1]

オーナー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
A (映画製作者)		B (原作者) C (脚本家) D (画家)		E (映画監督)	

[0028] A table 1 is an example in case contents are the works of a film. in this case, a 2 casks of provider copyright person (author) -- Filmmaker A -- although it is only one person, the painter D describing the picture used into the original author B, Dramatist C, and a work is the party who requires a selling agreement as the so-called classic author etc. Moreover, the film director E who is an author shall have exchanged agreements of a purport of receiving a run NINGURO spear tee from Filmmaker A with a contents sale. however -- since it is not settling on a part for ** between each above-mentioned ** in this case -- each ** -- it is especially treated as parts, such as **.

[Example 2]

[0029]

[A table 2]

オーナー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
F (共有著作権者) G (共有著作権者)					

[0030] A table 2 requires contents for joint writing; and is an example in case an author keeps [person / copyright] been. also in this case -- since the agreement [especially / (equity)] of each share copyright persons F and G is not made -- both -- it is especially (equity) treated as division into equal parts.

[Example 3]

[0031]

[A table 3]

オーナー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
H (共有著作権者) I (共有著作権者)	0.7 0.3				

[0032] A table 3 is an example in the case of being among each share copyright persons H and I about

an agreement [especially / (equity)]. In this case, it is paid to H, and since there is an agreement [especially / (equity)], at the time of distribution of proceeds, 30 percent of proceeds are paid to I 70 percent of proceeds, respectively.

[Example 4]

[0033]

[A table 4]

オーサー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
J (代表者)		*			

[0034] A table 4 is an example in case it is shown that the party who requires the selling agreement other than this representative J exists while Representative J is specified. In this case, what is necessary is just to pay proceeds only to this one representative, since only Representative J is seen by the SD center 1 (with the intervention of the SD center 1, Representative J is concerned, there is and he is indebted to the rightful claimant of others which are not specified for the duty which distributes these proceeds.). [no] However, the SD center 1 can know that rightful claimants other than Representative J must also be made into a party with an agreement with a notation "*", when concluding a selling agreement.

[0035] The CD-ROM editorial department 16 makes a market analysis, specifies what should be carried to CD-ROM out of the contents group already stored in the contents database 21, and concludes a selling agreement about these specified contents among the rightful claimants (only those who only have the claim are removed to a provider 2) 3 of others which should be made those provider 2 and contracting parties. In this selling agreement, the propriety (abatement propriety information about the propriety of abatement of the selling price) of discount of ID of a provider 2 and the rightful claimant 3 of contracting-parties slack and others, content ID, the selling price, a sale shelf-life (to [from when] when can it sell?), a payment site (partition ratio of the proceeds between a provider 2 and an SD center 1 employment person), and the selling price etc. is fixed. The CD-ROM editorial department 16 stores the content of this selling agreement in the agreement master 22 as the 2nd database.

[0036] Moreover, it enciphers using a specific key and the CD-ROM editorial department 16 writes the contents with which the selling agreement was concluded in original recording CD-ROM. Moreover, the CD-ROM number mentioned above, a navigator (program), and an installer are also written in this CD-ROM. The CD-ROM editorial department 16 hands original recording CD-ROM edited in this way to the CD-ROM publisher 4, and does publication bailment of CD-ROM. Moreover, the CD-ROM editorial department 16 writes the content ID of the contents written in this original recording CD-ROM at the CD-ROM number of this original recording CD-ROM and its shelf-life, and a list, the selling price, a sale shelf-life, a key, etc. in the goods master 23 as the 1st database.

[0037] The key sales department 17 checks the CD-ROM number and content ID which were written to reception and this purchase cut-form in the purchase cut-form sent from a user's 5 personal computer 6, and a access number with reference to the goods master 23. And an error message is outputted, when the expiration date of CD-ROM11 the very thing has passed, the effective subscription period of contents has passed or there is nothing applicable to these numbers or ID into the goods master 23. In being other, a corresponding key is read from the goods master 23, and this key is enciphered with a access number, and it returns them to a user's 5 personal computer 6, using as a purchase number the data obtained as a result of this encryption. The key sales department 17 charges with sending of this purchase number. That is, while reading the selling price of the sold contents from the goods master 23, purchasing content ID and its selling price, indicating in a cut-form and sending to a user's 5 personal computer 6, the sales cut-form which indicated the user ID of the same matter and the purchaser slack user 5 is sold, and it accumulates in the cut-form file 24.

[0038] In addition, in this key sales department 17, ID of each contents stored in the goods master 23, its

title, and the notice plate 42 with which that selling price is copied are built in. This notice plate 42 can be shown from a user 5 by the navigator 10 of a personal computer 6.

[0039] At last, with reference to the sales slip file 24, the claim section 18 as an accounting means settles sales quantity for every contents and every provider, and notifies the settlement-of-accounts result to the updating section 20 every month. Moreover, the claim section 18 is sold for every user ID of a user 5, totals the amount of money, and performs the package claim of the proceeds to the claim vicarious execution section 14 of the network service firm 7. When the claim vicarious execution section 14 pays proceeds according to this proceeds claim, the claim section 18 notifies that to the payment section 19.

[0040] The internal configuration of the payment section 19 is shown in drawing 4. The contents proceeds calculation section 25 which constitutes the payment section 19 directs read-out of the sales slip accumulated into the sales slip file 24 as a record means to the sales cut-form reference section 29, if advice is received from the claim section 18. the sales slip which carried out reading appearance of the contents proceeds calculation section 25 as a calculation means -- being based -- the proceeds frame for every contents -- totaling -- an employment person -- it especially notifies to the subtraction section 26.

[0041] an employment person -- the subtraction section 26 especially directs read-out of the payment site of each contents indicated during the agreement master 22 to the agreement master reference section 30, if advice of the proceeds frame for every contents is received from the contents proceeds calculation section 25. an employment person -- the subtraction section 26 subtracts a part for picking of the employment person of the SD center 1 which becomes settled by the payment site from proceeds for every contents, and especially notifies it to the proceeds distribution count section 27.

[0042] the proceeds distribution count section 27 -- an employment person -- if advice of the proceeds after subtraction is especially received from the subtraction section 26, read-out of the provider information on each contents indicated by the contents database 21 is directed to the contents database reference section 31. The proceeds distribution count section 27 distributes the notified proceeds for every contents between each provider (author) 2 by whom the ID is indicated as provider information, and the other rightful claimants 3. under the present circumstances, when [that] the law for ** of each provider (author) 2 and the other rightful claimants 3 is in provider information, it is especially alike, and it responds, proceeds are distributed and there is no law for **, it distributes uniformly to each **. The proceeds distribution count section 27 totals proceeds to each ID (ID registered as a thing of a provider 2 or the other rightful claimants 3) of every, and notifies them to the payment processing section 28.

[0043] The payment processing section 28 performs payment processing to the proceeds totaled for every ID. That is, based on this ID, the bank account of each provider 2 and the other rightful claimants 3 is specified, and this specified bank account receives the totaled proceeds.

[0044] The internal configuration of the updating section 20 is shown in drawing 5. The contents sale count section 32 which constitutes the updating section 20 directs read-out of the selling price indicated by the sales slip in the sales slip file 24 to the sales slip reference section 38, if advice is received from the claim section 18 about the number of sales for every contents. The contents sale count section 32 adds up the sale for every contents based on the selling price indicated by the number of sales and sales slip for every contents which were notified from the claim section 18.

[0045] The subscription period check section 33 directs read-out of the subscription period of each contents indicated in the goods master 23 to the goods master reference section 39. The current day entry from the clock section (clock means) 40 is inputted into this subscription period check section 33. The last day of a subscription period discovers the contents used as a current date and the same month, and notifies the subscription period check section 33 to the renewal section 36 of a goods master. Moreover, the subscription period check section 33 discovers the contents (namely, contents which this time hits after the predetermined event within the subscription period) which remain from a current date to the last day of a subscription period, and have become less than January, and notifies them to the content check section 35 of an agreement. Furthermore, the subscription period check section 33 notifies the other contents to the number check section 35 of contents sales. The number check section 34 of

contents sales discovers the contents whose sale total per moon is 1000 or less out of the contents notified from the subscription period check section 33 based on the sales quantity for every contents notified from the claim section 18, and notifies them to the content check section 34 of an agreement. [0046] The content check section 35 of an agreement directs to read the content of an agreement about the notified contents out of the agreement master 22 to the agreement master reference section 41, if advice of contents is received from the subscription period check section 33 or the number check section 34 of contents sales. The content check section 35 of an agreement discovers what discount of the selling price is accepted in by the agreement out of carrier beam contents in the above-mentioned advice based on the read content of an agreement, and notifies it to the renewal section 36 of a goods master. [0047] The renewal section 36 of a goods master deletes the data for the subscription period check section 33 to direct advice from the goods master 23 about carrier beam contents. Moreover, the selling price indicated in the goods master 23 about carrier beam contents in advice from the content check section 35 of an agreement is rewritten in a cheap price. That is, these subscription period check section 33, the number check section 34 of contents sales, the content check section 35 of an agreement, and the renewal section 36 of a goods master are equivalent to an updating means. [0048] About all the contents indicated in the goods master 23, the notice plate rewriting section 37 copies each content ID, its title, and its selling price, and overwrites the notice plate 42 of the key sales department 17.

Flow until contents are sold by the contents negotiation system in a <outline of contents negotiation system> book operation gestalt is explained with reference to the flow chart of drawing 6 thru/or drawing 11.

[Contents acceptance in contents accession department of SD center] drawing 6 shows the processing for the contents acceptance performed in the contents accession department 15 of the SD center 1.

[0049] In S001 of the beginning in drawing 6, it is confirmed whether the contents acceptance agreement was concluded between the employment person of the SD center 1, and the provider 2. And when a contents acceptance agreement is concluded, contents are accepted in S002. That is, contents are inputted through the drive equipment or the communication interface which is not illustrated.

[0050] The contents accepted in S002 are stored in the contents database 21 in the following S003. In the following S004, the content ID given to the contents stored in the contents database in S003 and the provider information (ID of a provider's 2 authoring ID and the other rightful claimants 3 and each [these] ** especially) mentioned above are generated.

[0051] In the following S005, the content ID and provider information which were generated in S004 are registered into the contents database 21.

[CD-ROM edit in the CD-ROM editorial department of SD center] drawing 7 shows the processing for the CD-ROM edit performed in the CD-ROM editorial department 16 of the SD center 1.

[0052] In S101 of the beginning in drawing 7, the editing task of CD-ROM is started according to the instruction from an operator. In the following S102, the good contents corresponding to an edit concept investigate whether it is a certain ***** with reference to the contents database 22. In the following S103, it is confirmed whether it opted for publication of the contents discovered out of the contents database 22. And if the decision of publication was not made, processing will be returned to S102 in order to look for other contents. On the other hand, if the decision of publication was made, processing will be advanced to S104.

[0053] In S104, the conclusion-of-a-contract activity over the contents by which publication decision was made is done among providers 2 (and rightful claimant 3 of others about the contents concerned). In the following S105, it is concluded in S104 and the agreement master 22 is created based on a selling agreement.

[0054] In the following S106, the goods master 23 is created from the number and its shelf-life, the content ID, the selling price, and the sale shelf-life of CD-ROM which carries the contents concerned.

[0055] In the following S107, the contents by which the selling agreement was made are enciphered with a specific key. The key used for this encryption is also stored in the goods master 23. In the following S108, the genuine article contents with which encryption was able to be managed to original

recording CD-ROM and the trial version contents by which the functional limit was made, a navigator (program), and an installer can be burned.

[0056] In the following S109, completed original recording CD-ROM is sent to the CD-ROM publisher 4, and a publication request is performed. In addition, according to this publication request, the CD-ROM publisher 4 creates many CD-ROMs 11 based on original recording CD-ROM, and it sells to a user 5 or he sends to the user 5 who is the member registered into the network service firm 7. And if the user 5 who received this CD-ROM 11 loads CD-ROM 11 to a personal computer 6 and performs the installer in CD-ROM 11, while a navigator (program) 10 will be installed on a hard disk 12, the unique machine ID is generated for each personal computer of every, and it is written in a hard disk 12.

[Contents purchase processing by navigator] drawing 8 shows the contents purchase processing performed by the navigator 10 installed in the personal computer 6.

[0057] In S201 of the beginning in drawing 8, CD-ROM 11 is operated according to the actuation from a user 5. For example, menu screens, such as a purchase reception menu screen stored in CD-ROM 11, are displayed, or the trial version contents are made into a trial condition.

[0058] In the following S202, it waits for a user 5 to opt for the purchase of which contents. In S203 performed when it opts for the purchase of contents, an access number is generated based on the CD-ROM number of CD-ROM 11, and the content ID of contents by which a purchase decision was made. And based on the user ID of the user 5 concerned, the purchase cut-form of a text data format is created in these CD-ROM number, content ID and an access number, and a list. In addition, about the generated access number, it holds in the memory which is not illustrated.

[0059] In the following S204, the communications program which is not illustrated is started and it connects with the network service firm 7 via a public telephone network. In the following S205, it connects with the key sales department 17 of the SD center 1 through the gateway 13.

[0060] In the following S206, file transmission of the purchase cut-form created in S203 is carried out according to text format to the key sales department 17. In the following S207, it waits for the key sales department 17 to send a key (purchase number) according to this purchase cut-form.

[0061] In the following S208, it gets over based on the access number which held the purchase number which the key sales department 17 has sent in the memory which is not illustrated, and a key is taken out. And a user 5 compound-izes the encryption contents which made a purchase decision using this key.

[0062] In the following S209, these compound-ized contents are installed in a hard disk 12. Processing of this navigator 10 is completed by the above.

[Sale processing in key sales department of SD center] drawing 9 shows the processing for the contents sale performed in the key sales department 17 of the SD center 1.

[0063] It waits for reception of the purchase cut-form from a user 5 in S301 of the beginning in drawing 9. In S302 performed when a purchase cut-form is received, the goods master 23 is referred to based on the CD-ROM number indicated by the purchase cut-form.

[0064] In the following S303, it is confirmed whether CD-ROM corresponding to the CD-ROM number indicated by the purchase cut-form is within a current shelf-life based on the shelf-life of CD-ROM indicated by the goods master 23 referred to in S302. And in not being within a current shelf-life, in S311, the message of the purport which is an expiration date piece is returned to a user's 5 personal computer 6, and in order to wait for the following purchase cut-form, it returns processing to S301.

[0065] In S304 performed when it is within the shelf-life of current CD-ROM, the access number indicated by whether to be surely in agreement with the CD-ROM number indicated by the purchase cut-form and the thing content ID is indicated to be by this goods master 23, and the purchase cut-form confirms logically whether to be the right or not based on the goods master 23 referred to in S302. And when the CD-ROM number and content ID which were indicated by the purchase cut-form are not in agreement with what is indicated by the goods master 23, and when an access number is not logically right, in S311, the message showing that is returned to a user's 5 personal computer 6, and in order to wait for the following purchase cut-form, processing is returned to S301. In addition, as mentioned above, since the content ID of the contents which passed over the subscription period is deleted from the

goods master 23 by the updating section 20, when that content ID is indicated by the purchase cut-form, it is eliminated by this step.

[0066] On the other hand, a CD-ROM number, content ID, and a access number all read a key (key used for enciphering the contents corresponding to content ID) from the goods master 23 to a right case in S305.

[0067] In the following S306, it enciphers with a access number and the key read in S305 is returned to a user's 5 personal computer 6. Accounting is performed in the following S307. That is, as it mentioned above, a purchase cut-form and a sales slip are created.

[0068] In the following S308, the purchase cut-form created in S307 is sent to a user's 5 personal computer 6. In the following S309, it checks whether the purchase cut-form sending by S308 has been good. And if poor, it will purchase in S312, it will carry out with [of a cut-form] resending, and processing will be returned to S309.

[0069] On the other hand, in S310 performed when purchase cut-form sending is good, the sales slip created in S307 is filed in the sales slip file 24. By the above, since the processing to one purchase cut-form was completed, in order to wait for the following purchase cut-form, processing is returned to S301.

[Claim processing in the claim section of SD center] drawing 10 shows the claim processing performed in the claim section 18 of the SD center 1, and the payment processing performed in the payment section 19.

[0070] In S401 of the beginning in drawing 10 , it confirms whether be the end of the month with present in Japan, and waits for the end of the month to come. And when the end of the month comes with present in Japan, in S402, all the sales slips accumulated into the sales slip file 24 are read, and the number of sheets of a sales slip is settled every contents and every provider 2.

[0071] In the following S403, the sales slip number of sheets for every contents is notified to the updating section 20. In the following S404, the read sales slip is summarized for every user ID registered into the network service firm 7, and a proceeds frame is totaled for every user ID of this. And the network service firm 7 is asked for the proceeds frame for every totaled user ID. If this claim is received, the claim vicarious execution section 14 of the network service firm 7 will add this contents price to each user's 5 charge of service utilization, and will ask a credit card company 8 for it. The carrier beam credit card company 8 pulls down this claim amount of money from each user's 5 bank account, and pays a claim to the claim vicarious execution section 14 of the network service firm 7. The claim vicarious execution section 14 deducts the charge of service utilization and the predetermined commission for every user 5 from the paid amount of money, and pays them to the SD center 1.

[0072] In S405 of drawing 10 , when there are waiting and payment about payment from the claim vicarious execution section 14 of the network service firm 7, processing is passed to the payment section 19.

Refer to the agreement master 22 and the sales slip file 24 for the payment section 19 of the [payment processing in the payment section of SD center] SD center 1 in S406 of drawing 10 . In the following S407, a part for picking of the employment person of the SD center 1 is subtracted from proceeds. Namely, the sales slip accumulated in the sales slip file 24 is divided for every contents, and the selling price indicated by all sales slips is totaled for every contents. On the other hand, the picking molar fraction of the employment person of the SD center 1 is read from the publication of the payment site indicated by the agreement master 22. And a part for picking of the employment person of the SD center 1 is subtracted from the proceeds for every totaled contents.

[0073] The contents database 21 is referred to in the following S408. Namely, provider information is read for every contents. A dividend is calculated in the following S409. That is, proceeds after subtraction are distributed to each ID (ID of an unit, two or more providers' 2 ID, an unit, or two or more providers 2 and an unit, or ID of the rightful claimant 3 of two or more others) of every [which is indicated by the provider information on each contents]. In this case, when each ** 2 and 3 takes to provider information and the part is indicated although proceeds are uniformly distributed to each ID if a part for picking of each ** 2 and 3 is not indicated by provider information, proceeds are distributed

according to the publication for this picking.

[0074] In the following S410, the bank account of each provider 2 and the other rightful claimants 3 receives the proceeds distributed in S409 according to each ID 2 and 3. Then, processing is returned to the 18 claim section S401 for claim processing next month.

[Update process in the updating section of SD center] drawing 11 shows an update process of the goods master 23 performed in the updating section 20 of the SD center 1.

[0075] In S501 of the beginning in drawing 11, it waits for advice of the sales slip number of sheets for every contents from the claim section 18. In S502 performed when there is advice of sales slip number of sheets, sales are added up for every contents.

[0076] In the following S503, it is confirmed whether the thing by this month has the last day of a sale shelf-life with reference to the sale shelf-life of each contents indicated by the goods master 23. And about the contents the last day of a sale shelf-life is [contents] till this month, the information about the contents is eliminated from the goods master 23 in S510.

[0077] On the other hand, about the contents it is not [contents] the last day of a sale shelf-life even by the end of this month, it is confirmed in S504 whether the sales number this month is 1000 or less. And a sales number performs processing of S505 about 1000 or less contents.

[0078] On the other hand, about the contents to which a sales number exceeds 1000, it is confirmed in S508 whether the remainder of a sale shelf-life is less than in January with reference to the sale shelf-life of each contents again indicated by the goods master 23. And about the contents to which the remainder of a sale shelf-life is over January, the goods master 23 advances (S509) and processing to S507 as actual condition maintenance. Moreover, processing of S505 is performed about the contents whose remainder of a sale shelf-life is less than in January.

[0079] In S505, the content of an agreement about each contents indicated by the agreement master 22 is investigated, and it is confirmed whether discount of the selling price of processing-object contents is accepted. And when discount is not accepted, the goods master 23 advances (S509) and processing to S507 as actual condition maintenance. On the other hand, when discount is accepted, in S506, rate discount of the selling price of the processing-object contents indicated by the goods master 23 of fixed is carried out, and processing is advanced to S507.

[0080] In S507, the content ID and the selling price of all contents are copied from the goods master 23, and it sticks on the notice plate 42 of the key sales department 17. Then, in order to wait for advice of the degree from the claim section 18, processing is returned to S501.

[0081] According to the contents negotiation system constituted as mentioned above, the balance except a part for picking of the employment person of the SD center 1 is distributed among the dividends which sold contents and were obtained also to those [3] who have a certain claim about the contents concerned other than provider 2. Therefore, a complicated activity [say / redistributing proceeds to those / 3 / as for whom the representative slack provider 2 has these claims for payment of proceeds after a carrier beam collectively] is omissible. Moreover, about the contents to which the thing and the number of sales per month which the sale shelf-life remained and became less than January fell off below in the constant rate, on condition that discount is accepted by the selling agreement, the selling price can be lowered. Consequently, about the contents to which the period when sale authorization of the contents to which the period which can be sold is limited like seasonal goods, or the SD center 1 is carried out is limited, the last stage's of a subscription period sales can be evoked by discount of the selling price, and the proceeds frame within a period can be raised. Similarly, about the contents to which the number of sales has fallen off, discount can perform rational selling price setting out, and the number of sales and a proceeds frame can be raised.

[0082]

[Effect of the Invention] As explained above, according to the contents selling price accounting system and the accounting approach of this invention While distributing the contents in the condition of having been enciphered to said purchaser, even if it is the case of the contents negotiation system which sells these contents by supplying the purchaser who wishes purchasing of these contents with the key for decrypting these contents According to a sale stage, the selling price of contents can be updated like the

case of over-the-counter sales at the usual retail store.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[Field of the Invention] This invention relates to the contents selling price accounting system and the accounting approach in the contents negotiation system which sells these contents by supplying those who wish purchasing of these contents with the key for compound-izing these contents while enciphering and distributing contents.

PRIOR ART

[Description of the Prior Art] In recent years, the negotiation by the CD-ROM medium of the contents (software, such as a film, a music work, a computer program, and a database) which are digital information is briskly performed with the spread of CD-ROM drives. This is based on that it is the mass medium by which a CD-ROM medium can manufacture very cheaply, and exceeds 500MB, and the low price and improvement in the speed of a CD-ROM drive. Furthermore, CD-ROM is because the negotiation inserted into a journal as compared with the capacity since it is a lightweight thin shape is possible.

[0003] By the way, since the contents stored in this CD-ROM are digital data, they have risk of copying illegally and inaccurate installing easily (it being here and introducing contents into the disk unit of a personal computer system with "install"). Therefore, even if it faces the contents negotiation using CD-ROM, it is called for that such an illegal copy and unjust install can be prevented.

[0004] So, when circulating contents in CD-ROM, some kinds of the trial version contents and the enciphered genuine article contents are recorded on CD-ROM, and he circulates them, and was trying to teach conventionally the key for making these genuine article contents decrypt in exchange for dues payment (lump sum payment) of contents only to the user who wishes the activity of genuine article contents. In addition, in the following explanation, in order to talk intelligible, it is referred to as "Selling contents" to teach a key in exchange for dues payment of contents, and the thing of the dues of contents is called "selling price of contents."

[0005] In such a conventional contents negotiation system, the selling price of contents was always fixed.

EFFECT OF THE INVENTION

[Effect of the Invention] As explained above, according to the contents selling price accounting system and the accounting approach of this invention While distributing the contents in the condition of having been enciphered to said purchaser, even if it is the case of the contents negotiation system which sells these contents by supplying the purchaser who wishes purchasing of these contents with the key for decrypting these contents According to a sale stage, the selling price of contents can be updated like the case of over-the-counter sales at the usual retail store.

TECHNICAL PROBLEM

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] however, in the case of the contents (namely, the text data of a journal or a newspaper -- like -- the music data of contents with important informational freshness, and a Christmas song, the video data of a Christmas film, and the image data of a New Year's card -- like -- the strong contents of season nature) to which the period in which mass-marketing by a certain amount of expensive rank is possible is limited naturally, for example, if a contents negotiation systems operation person or a contents provider wants to obtain the largest possible sales proceeds within the period, he will want. Also in the case of the contents to which the period when similarly the contents negotiation systems operation person is allowed to perform the sale is beforehand limited by the selling agreement, if a contents negotiation systems operation person wants to obtain the largest possible sales proceeds within the period permitted, he will want. Furthermore, since a quantity sold decreases extremely just before version up in being the contents by which version up is planned for every period of a certain amount of like a computer program, a contents negotiation systems operation person or a contents provider wants by lowering the selling price to ease reduction in a quantity sold.

[0007] It is made in order that this invention may meet the above demands. While distributing the contents in the condition of having been enciphered to said purchaser, even if it is the case of the contents negotiation system which sells these contents by supplying the purchaser who wishes purchasing of these contents with the key for decrypting these contents Let it be a technical problem to offer the contents selling price accounting system and the accounting approach of updating the selling price of contents according to a sale stage like the case of over-the-counter sales at the usual retail store.

MEANS

[Means for Solving the Problem] The following configurations were used for this invention in order to solve the above-mentioned technical problem. Namely, the contents selling price accounting system by this invention As shown in principle drawing of drawing 1 , it is a contents selling price accounting system in the contents negotiation system which sells contents. The 1st database which recorded the selling price and the subscription period which were set up about each contents (102), When this time indicated at least to be the clock means (100) which shows this time by said clock means (100) is a predetermined period within said subscription period currently recorded on said 1st database (102) The updating means of the price which adopts a different price from the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database (102) (101), It is characterized by having an accounting means (103) to charge the selling price of the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database (102), to those who purchased contents (it corresponds to claim 1).

[0009] That is, according to the contents selling price accounting system by this invention, the selling price and the subscription period which were set up about each contents are recorded on the 1st database (102). Moreover, the clock means (100) shows this time. An updating means (101) updates the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database (102), when this time shown by said clock means (100) is a predetermined period within said subscription period currently recorded on said 1st database (102). An accounting means (103) charges selling price) after updating, when renewal of (is performed to those who purchased contents with the selling price of the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database (102).

[0010] Here, contents are software and video datas, such as a program, music data, and a film, are included. These contents may be analog format or may be digital formats.

[0011] the 1st database may be a single database physically and recorded the selling price or a subscription period, respectively -- you may be a separate database physically. A clock means should just show a current date at least.

[0012] An updating means may also detect that the sale total of the contents concerned is more than fixed numbers, and may update said selling price (it corresponds to claim 2). If it does in this way, even if the remainder of a subscription period is long, the rational selling price can be reset to the inelastic contents of a sales number, and the sales of these contents can be lengthened.

[0013] Moreover, you may make it an updating means reduce the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database (it corresponds to claim 3). Moreover, an updating means may be made to change said selling price for every fixed period (it corresponds to claim 5).

[0014] Moreover, an updating means may eliminate the selling price set up about the contents concerned currently recorded on said 1st database, when hitting after the last day of said subscription period when this time shown by said clock means is recorded on said 1st database (it corresponds to claim 6). Although such a thing is also an object for updating, since such a thing cannot already be sold, the capacity of the 1st database can be used effectively by deleting a publication.

[0015] The following configurations may be added to the contents selling price accounting system by this invention. That is, you may have further the 2nd database which recorded the abatement propriety information about the propriety of abatement of the selling price set up about each contents. In this case, said abatement propriety information that said updating means is recorded on said 2nd database about the contents concerned can also make it the conditions for updating said selling price to indicate that abatement of the selling price of the contents concerned is possible (it corresponds to claim 4). If it does in this way, since a contents provider can fix whether abatement of the selling price of the contents for an agreement is possible on the occasion of the selling agreement with a systems operation person, it will be prevented that the selling price of contents will be reduced against this contents provider's volition.

[0016] Moreover, the contents selling price accounting approach by this invention It is the contents selling price accounting approach in the contents negotiation system which sells contents. The selling

price and the subscription period which were set up about each contents are beforehand recorded on the 1st database. About the contents which the subscription period of each contents and this time which are recorded on this 1st database are compared, and this time hits at the predetermined period within that subscription period. The selling price currently recorded on said 1st database is changed, and it is characterized by charging this changed price at a contents purchaser (it corresponds to claim 7).

[0017]

[Embodiment of the Invention] Below, the gestalt of operation of this invention is explained based on a drawing.

<Outline of contents negotiation system> drawing 2 is the block diagram showing the outline of a contents negotiation system in which this invention is carried out. In this drawing 2, the SD center 1 is equipment which takes the lead in a contents negotiation system. The employment person who employs this SD center 1 is also a manager using this contents negotiation system of a contents negotiation business. This SD center 1 distributes the part of the proceeds of an epilogue and the sold contents for a selling agreement to a provider 2 from a provider 2 to what selling among the contents which accepted and accepted those contents determined based on this contents acceptance agreement while contracting a contents acceptance agreement with the provider (provider) 2 of various contents. Moreover, by the case, the SD center 1 distributes the part of the proceeds while making a selling agreement also among the rightful claimants 3 of others other than provider 2. The SD center 1 performs edit which enciphers the contents which made the selling agreement and can be burned on original recording CD-ROM of one sheet. The navigator (program) which performs a series of processings for decrypting the enciphered contents on the occasion of this edit, and the installer for these navigators (program) can both also be burned. After performing such edit, the SD center 1 requests publication of this CD-ROM from the CD-ROM publisher 4.

[0018] The SD center 1 is connected to a user's 5 personal computer 6 through this network service firm 7 and public telephone network which is not illustrated while connecting with the network service firm 7 through the gateway 13. The SD center 1 transmits the key and purchase cut-form for decrypting the contents shown in the purchase cut-form corresponding to the purchase cut-form transmitted through the network service firm 7 from the personal computer 6 to a user's 5 personal computer through the network service firm 7. Moreover, the claim vicarious execution section 14 of the network service firm 7 is asked for the SD center 1, and it collects the prices of contents sold by doing in this way.

[0019] A provider 2 is usually the copyright person (author) of contents. Specifically, the independent copyright person about a certain contents (the work of the so-called primary work, a secondary work, and a film, edit work), all share copyright persons about a certain contents, all copyright persons about each component in a set work, etc. are mentioned. These persons are direct copyright persons (the so-called modern author) of the contents concerned, and unless a selling agreement is concluded among these persons, it is because the SD center 1 cannot sell the contents concerned. Each [these] provider 2 has unique ID (authoring ID), respectively.

[0020] The other rightful claimants 3 are third parties other than provider 2, and when those who have the access which can be directly asserted to the SD center 1 when the contents concerned are reproduced, and contents are reproduced, they are those who have the claims (claim of a run NINGURO spear tee etc.) which can be asserted to a provider 2. As a former example, the copyright person of each component in the copyright person (the so-called classic author) of a secondary work and the Hara work in the work of a film, the copyright person of the work used for the work of a film, the demonstration house in a music work, and an edit work is mentioned. Since the SD center 1 cannot reproduce the contents concerned without consent of these persons, it must conclude a selling agreement also among these persons. Moreover, those who are authors (creator) who are not a copyright person as a latter example, and exchanged agreements of run NINGURO spear tee payment on the occasion of the transfer of copyright among copyright persons (copyright person applicable to a provider 2 or the former) are mentioned. Since the SD center 1 does not need to conclude these persons and selling agreements, it does not have in principle the need of allotting these persons the proceeds of contents by direct, either. However, a provider 2 has to distribute the dividend distributed to self to these persons as a run

NINGURO spear tee ex post. Therefore, if a part for these persons' picking is directly distributed from the SD center 1, a provider's 2 effort will be mitigated. Each of the rightful claimant 3 of these others also has unique ID (ID, such as a creator).

[0021] In the network service firm 7, while the project implementing body which offers network-data communication service, such as personal computer communications, is shown, the host computer is also shown. The network service firm 7 is connected through the public telephone network which is not illustrated according to the connection request from this personal computer 6 also to a user's 5 personal computer 6 registered as a member besides the SD center 1. And various services of the data exchange are performed between each connected personal computer 6 and the SD center 1. In addition, in order to register with this network service firm 7 as a member, a user 5 has to register into the network service firm 7 the number of the effective credit card which self has as an object for pulling [of the charge of service utilization] down.

[0022] Moreover, the claim vicarious execution section 14 of the network service firm 7 adds this claim amount of money to the charge of service utilization of the member user 5 who is a contents purchaser according to the claim of the contents price from the SD center 1. And the charge of service utilization to which the contents price was added is charged to the credit card company 8 to which this member user 5 registered that number into the network service firm 7. When the credit card company 8 has paid the charge of service utilization according to this claim, the network service firm 7 deducts the original charge of service utilization and an original predetermined commission, and pays the balance to the SD center 1.

[0023] A credit card company 8 charges directly the charge of service utilization charged from the claim vicarious execution section 14 to a user 5 (correctly a user's 5 bank account). The CD-ROM publisher 4 receives publication bailment of CD-ROM from the SD center 1, and reproduces original recording CD-ROM received from the SD center 1 to a large quantity. The CD-ROM publisher 4 sells to a user 5 CD-ROM11 which carried out in this way and was reproduced, or does free sending at the user 5 who is the registration member of the network service firm 6.

[0024] A user 5 loads CD-ROM11 which came to hand from the CD-ROM publisher 4 to the self personal computer 6. And the installer stored in CD-ROM11 is performed. Then, an installer generates a machine ID 50 according to generating of a random number etc., and writes this machine ID 50 in the hard disk 12 of a personal computer 6, while it installs a navigator 10 in the hard disk 12 of a personal computer 6. In addition, when the machine ID 50 is already generated in this hard disk 12, an installer does not generate the new machine ID 50.

[0025] If a navigator 10 is performed in a personal computer 6, a navigator 10 will generate the decode section 9. And a navigator 10 creates the purchase cut-form for contents purchase (text data) in which the user 5 did purchase hope while enabling trial of the trial version contents in CD-ROM11 according to the input from a user 5. Moreover, using the communications program which is not illustrated, it connects with the network service firm 7, and connects with the SD center 1 through the gateway 13 further, and the created purchase cut-form is transmitted to the SD center 1. In addition, ID (henceforth "user ID") of the access number generated from a CD-ROM number besides a CD-ROM number (unique for every class of each CD-ROM) and content ID (unique for every contents), content ID, and Machine ID and the user 5 concerned registered into the network service firm is written in this purchase cut-form. If the key (key for restoring to the enciphered contents) enciphered by this access number is returned from the SD center 1, with the access number currently recorded, a navigator 10 will decode a key and will pass it to the decode section 9. The decode section 9 reads the contents (enciphered contents) in which the user 5 is doing purchase hope from CD-ROM11, and compound-izes them using a key, and the compound-ized contents are stored in a hard disk 12.

Detailed internal configuration explanation of the SD center 1 is given using <the concrete configuration of the SD center 1>, next drawing 3 . In drawing 3 , the contents accession department 15 makes a contents acceptance agreement among providers 2. This is the agreement of the purport that consider as the preparation which will circulate the contents concerned through the contents negotiation system by the SD center 1 in the future, and the SD center 1 keeps the contents concerned. And the contents

accession department 15 accepts contents as effectiveness of this contents acceptance conclusion of a contract. And ID (content ID) of the accepted contents is generated and the contents concerned are stored in the contents database 21 with this content ID. Moreover, the contents accession department 15 also stores the provider information about these contents in the contents database 21. Although this provider information is ID (authoring ID) of the provider (author) 2 who is a party with a contents acceptance agreement, and persons other than provider 2, a person's [need / the selling agreement of the contents concerned / to be concluded] ID and conclusion of a selling agreement of contents are ID of those who have the claim of a run NINGURO spear tee about the sale of the contents concerned to a provider 2, although it is unnecessary. ID of each [these] ** is stored hierarchical in the contents database 21 by using a provider's 2 ID (authoring ID) as the top layer. in addition, when the agreement for ** is between each [these] **, the information on each fixed ** which especially boils and is attached is also stored in the contents database 21 as provider information.

[0026] The example of this provider information is shown below. In addition, in each following example, the alphabet shows ID, such as a provider, and although a notation "*" requires an appropriate person, it is shown that the specification is not made. [Example 1]

[0027]

[A table 1]

オーサー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
A (映画製作者)		B (原作者) C (脚本家) D (画家)		E (映画監督)	

[0028] A table 1 is an example in case contents are the works of a film. in this case, a 2 casks of provider copyright person (author) -- Filmmaker A -- although it is only one person, the painter D describing the picture used into the original author B, Dramatist C, and a work is the party who requires a selling agreement as the so-called classic author etc. Moreover, the film director E who is an author shall have exchanged agreements of a purport of receiving a run NINGURO spear tee from Filmmaker A with a contents sale. however -- since it is not settling on a part for ** between each above-mentioned ** in this case -- each ** -- it is especially treated as parts, such as **.

[Example 2]

[0029]

[A table 2]

オーサー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
F (共有著作権者) G (共有著作権者)					

[0030] A table 2 requires contents for joint writing, and is an example in case an author keeps [person / copyright] been. also in this case -- since the agreement [especially / (equity)] of each share copyright persons F and G is not made -- both -- it is especially (equity) treated as division into equal parts.

[Example 3]

[0031]

[A table 3]

オーサー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
H (共有著作権者)	0.7				
I (共有著作権者)	0.3				

[0032] A table 3 is an example in the case of being among each share copyright persons H and I about an agreement [especially / (equity)]. In this case, it is paid to H, and since there is an agreement [especially / (equity)], at the time of distribution of proceeds, 30 percent of proceeds are paid to I 70 percent of proceeds, respectively.

[Example 4]

[0033]

[A table 4]

オーサー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
J (代表者)		*			

[0034] A table 4 is an example in case it is shown that the party who requires the selling agreement other than this representative J exists while Representative J is specified. In this case, what is necessary is just to pay proceeds only to this one representative, since only Representative J is seen by the SD center 1 (with the intervention of the SD center 1, Representative J is concerned, there is and he is indebted to the rightful claimant of others which are not specified for the duty which distributes these proceeds.). [no] However, the SD center 1 can know that rightful claimants other than Representative J must also be made into a party with an agreement with a notation "*", when concluding a selling agreement.

[0035] The CD-ROM editorial department 16 makes a market analysis, specifies what should be carried to CD-ROM out of the contents group already stored in the contents database 21, and concludes a selling agreement about these specified contents among the rightful claimants (only those who only have the claim are removed to a provider 2) 3 of others which should be made those provider 2 and contracting parties. In this selling agreement, the propriety (abatement propriety information about the propriety of abatement of the selling price) of discount of ID of a provider 2 and the rightful claimant 3 of contracting-parties slack and others, content ID, the selling price, a sale shelf-life (to [from when] when can it sell?), a payment site (partition ratio of the proceeds between a provider 2 and an SD center 1 employment person), and the selling price etc. is fixed. The CD-ROM editorial department 16 stores the content of this selling agreement in the agreement master 22 as the 2nd database.

[0036] Moreover, it enciphers using a specific key and the CD-ROM editorial department 16 writes the contents with which the selling agreement was concluded in original recording CD-ROM. Moreover, the CD-ROM number mentioned above, a navigator (program), and an installer are also written in this CD-ROM. The CD-ROM editorial department 16 hands original recording CD-ROM edited in this way to the CD-ROM publisher 4, and does publication bailment of CD-ROM. Moreover, the CD-ROM editorial department 16 writes the content ID of the contents written in this original recording CD-ROM at the CD-ROM number of this original recording CD-ROM and its shelf-life, and a list, the selling price, a sale shelf-life, a key, etc. in the goods master 23 as the 1st database.

[0037] The key sales department 17 checks the CD-ROM number and content ID which were written to reception and this purchase cut-form in the purchase cut-form sent from a user's 5 personal computer 6, and a access number with reference to the goods master 23. And an error message is outputted, when the expiration date of CD-ROM11 the very thing has passed, the effective subscription period of contents has passed or there is nothing applicable to these numbers or ID into the goods master 23. In being

other, a corresponding key is read from the goods master 23, and this key is enciphered with a access number, and it returns them to a user's 5 personal computer 6, using as a purchase number the data obtained as a result of this encryption. The key sales department 17 charges with sending of this purchase number. That is, while reading the selling price of the sold contents from the goods master 23, purchasing content ID and its selling price, indicating in a cut-form and sending to a user's 5 personal computer 6, the sales cut-form which indicated the user ID of the same matter and the purchaser slack user 5 is sold, and it accumulates in the cut-form file 24.

[0038] In addition, in this key sales department 17, ID of each contents stored in the goods master 23, its title, and the notice plate 42 with which that selling price is copied are built in. This notice plate 42 can be shown from a user 5 by the navigator 10 of a personal computer 6.

[0039] At last, with reference to the sales slip file 24, the claim section 18 as an accounting means settles sales quantity for every contents and every provider, and notifies the settlement-of-accounts result to the updating section 20 every month. Moreover, the claim section 18 is sold for every user ID of a user 5, totals the amount of money, and performs the package claim of the proceeds to the claim vicarious execution section 14 of the network service firm 7. When the claim vicarious execution section 14 pays proceeds according to this proceeds claim, the claim section 18 notifies that to the payment section 19.

[0040] The internal configuration of the payment section 19 is shown in drawing 4 . The contents proceeds calculation section 25 which constitutes the payment section 19 directs read-out of the sales slip accumulated into the sales slip file 24 as a record means to the sales cut-form reference section 29, if advice is received from the claim section 18. the sales slip which carried out reading appearance of the contents proceeds calculation section 25 as a calculation means -- being based -- the proceeds frame for every contents -- totaling -- an employment person -- it especially notifies to the subtraction section 26.

[0041] an employment person -- the subtraction section 26 especially directs read-out of the payment site of each contents indicated during the agreement master 22 to the agreement master reference section 30, if advice of the proceeds frame for every contents is received from the contents proceeds calculation section 25. an employment person -- the subtraction section 26 subtracts a part for picking of the employment person of the SD center 1 which becomes settled by the payment site from proceeds for every contents, and especially notifies it to the proceeds distribution count section 27.

[0042] the proceeds distribution count section 27 -- an employment person -- if advice of the proceeds after subtraction is especially received from the subtraction section 26, read-out of the provider information on each contents indicated by the contents database 21 is directed to the contents database reference section 31. The proceeds distribution count section 27 distributes the notified proceeds for every contents between each provider (author) 2 by whom the ID is indicated as provider information, and the other rightful claimants 3. under the present circumstances, when [that] the law for ** of each provider (author) 2 and the other rightful claimants 3 is in provider information, it is especially alike, and it responds, proceeds are distributed and there is no law for **, it distributes uniformly to each **. The proceeds distribution count section 27 totals proceeds to each ID (ID registered as a thing of a provider 2 or the other rightful claimants 3) of every, and notifies them to the payment processing section 28.

[0043] The payment processing section 28 performs payment processing to the proceeds totaled for every ID. That is, based on this ID, the bank account of each provider 2 and the other rightful claimants 3 is specified, and this specified bank account receives the totaled proceeds.

[0044] The internal configuration of the updating section 20 is shown in drawing 5 . The contents sale count section 32 which constitutes the updating section 20 directs read-out of the selling price indicated by the sales slip in the sales slip file 24 to the sales slip reference section 38, if advice is received from the claim section 18 about the number of sales for every contents. The contents sale count section 32 adds up the sale for every contents based on the selling price indicated by the number of sales and sales slip for every contents which were notified from the claim section 18.

[0045] The subscription period check section 33 directs read-out of the subscription period of each contents indicated in the goods master 23 to the goods master reference section 39. In this subscription

period check section 33, it is the clock section.

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Drawing 1] Principle drawing of this invention

[Drawing 2] The schematic diagram of the contents negotiation system by the 1st operation gestalt of this invention

[Drawing 3] The block diagram showing the detailed configuration of the SD center 1 of drawing 2

[Drawing 4] The block diagram showing the detailed configuration of the payment section of drawing 3

[Drawing 5] The block diagram showing the detailed configuration of the updating section of drawing 3

[Drawing 6] The flow chart which shows the contents acceptance processing performed in the contents accession department of drawing 3

[Drawing 7] The flow chart which shows the CD-ROM edit processing performed in the CD-ROM editorial department of drawing 3

[Drawing 8] The flow chart which shows the contents purchase processing which the navigator of drawing 2 performs

[Drawing 9] The flow chart which shows the key sale processing performed in the key sales department of drawing 3

[Drawing 10] The flow chart which shows the payment processing performed in the claim processing and the payment section which are performed in the claim section of drawing 3

[Drawing 11] The flow chart which shows the update process performed in the updating section of drawing 3

[Brief Description of Notations]

1 SD Center

17 Key Sales Department

18 Claim Section

19 Payment Section

20 Updating Section

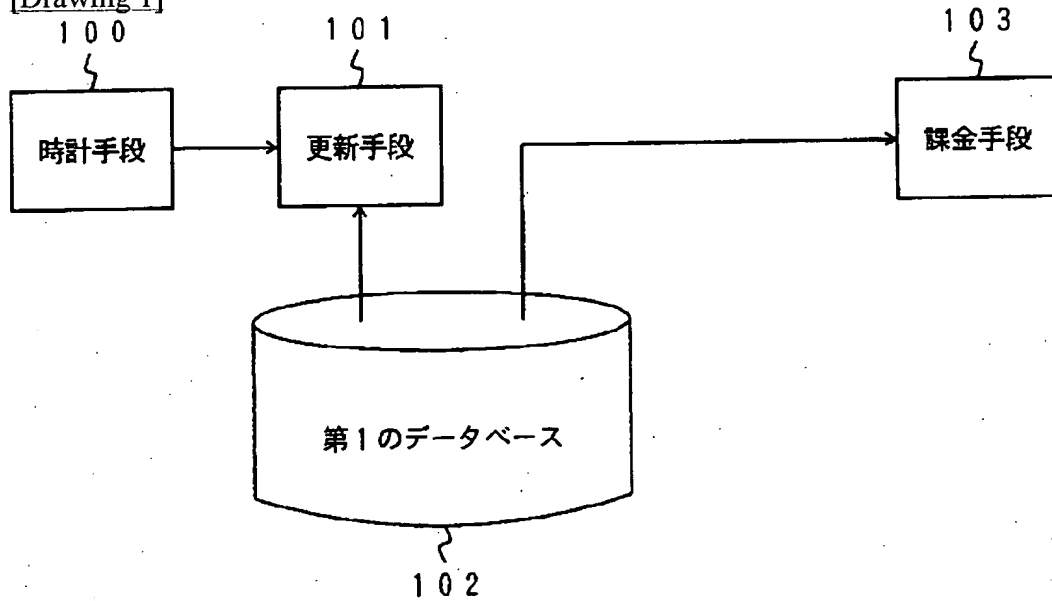
21 Contents Database

22 Agreement Master

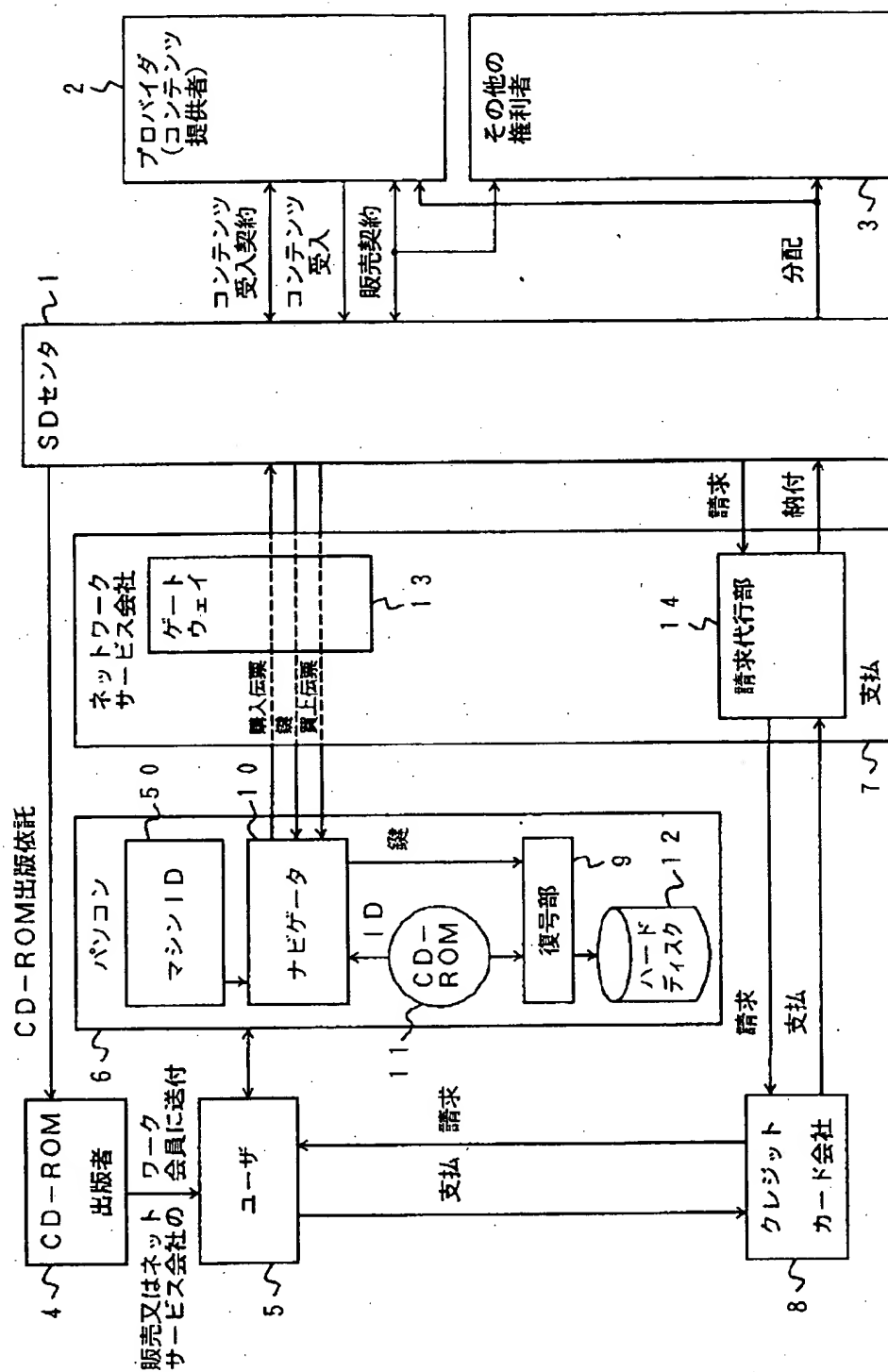
24 Sales Slip File

DRAWINGS

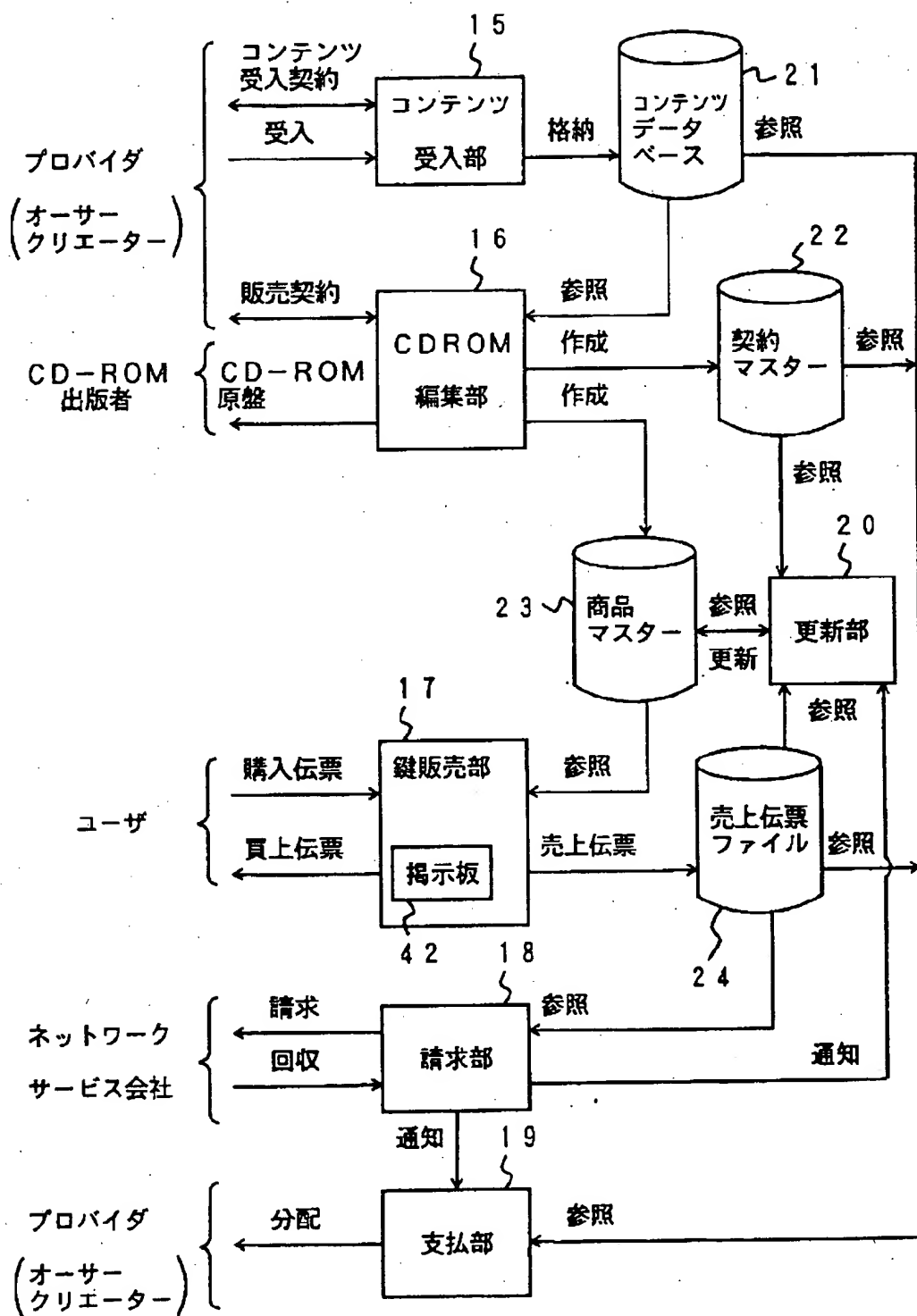
[Drawing 1]



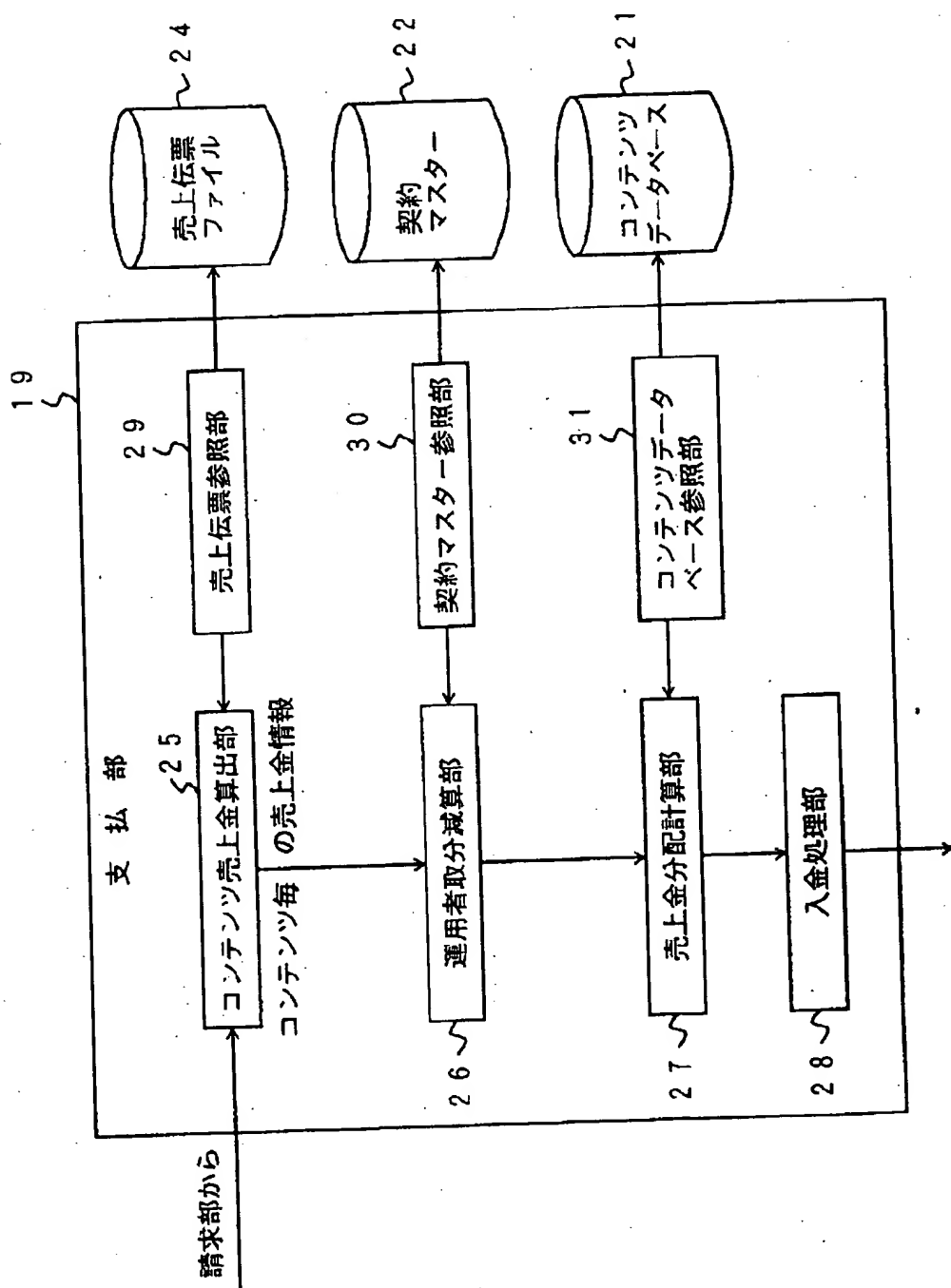
[Drawing 2]



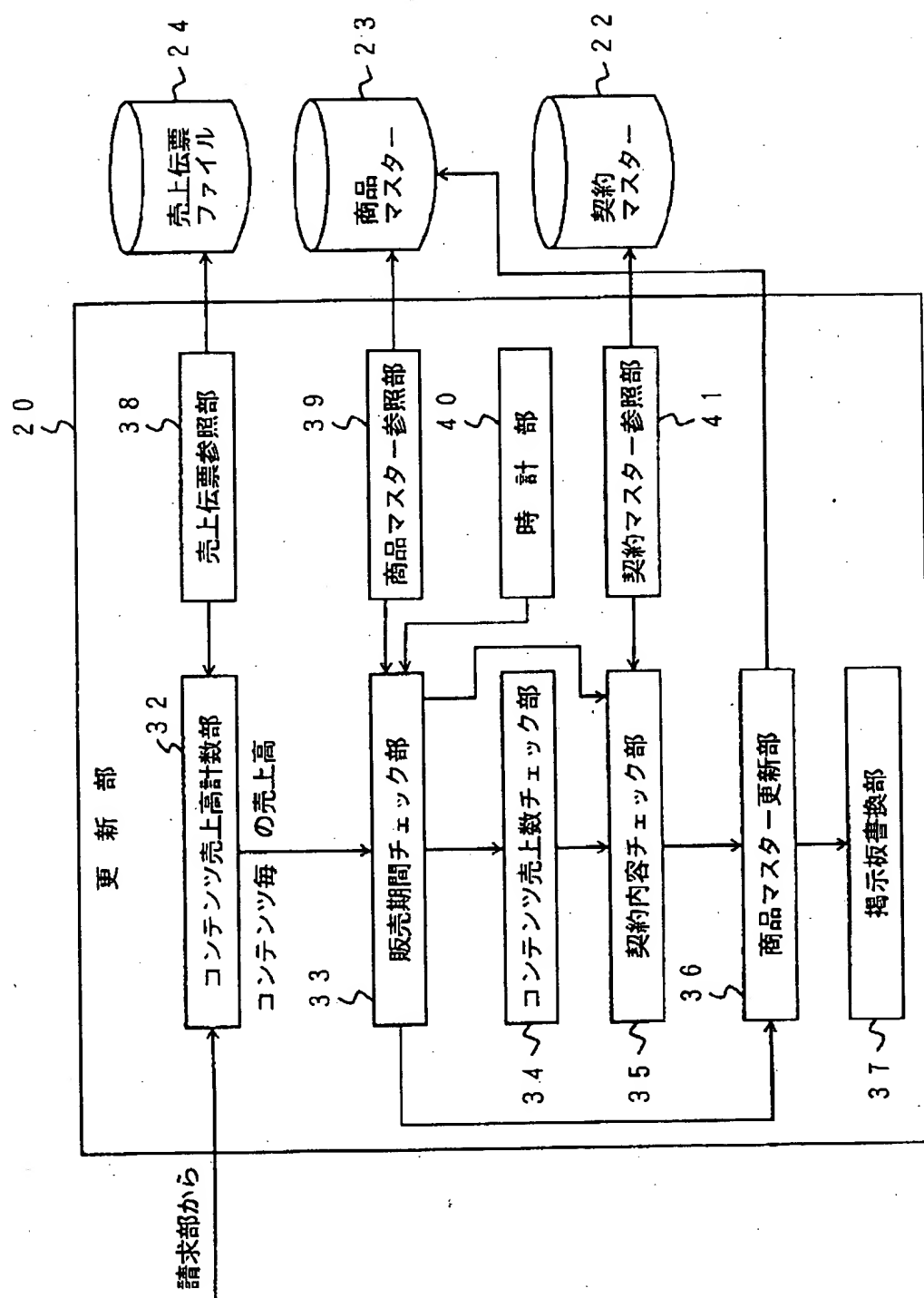
[Drawing 3]



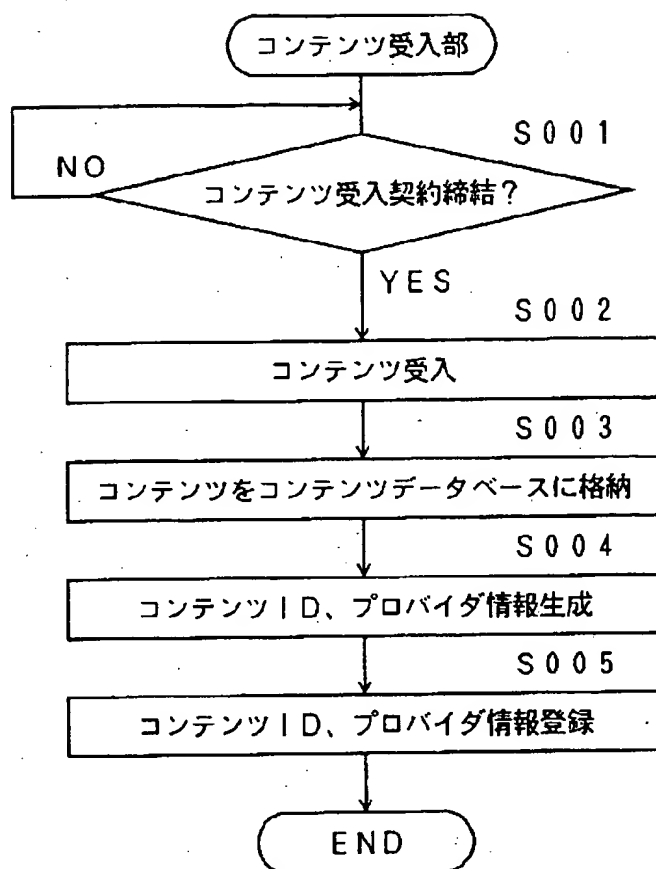
[Drawing 4]



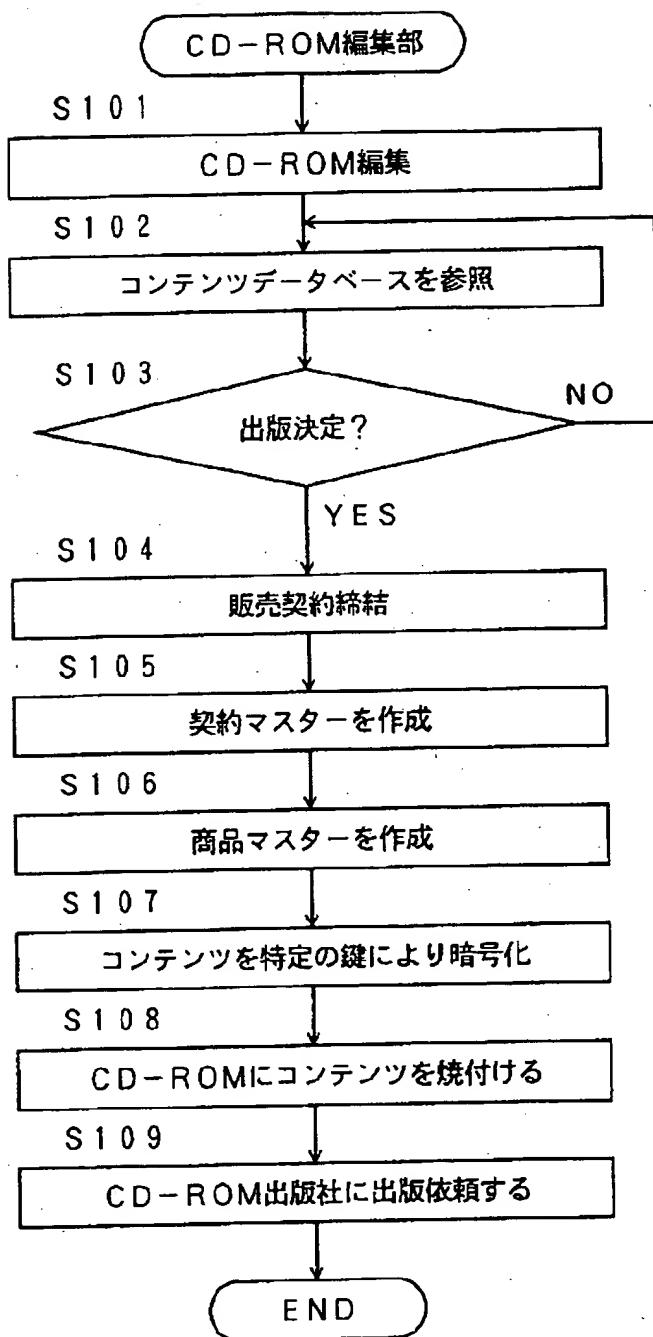
[Drawing 5]



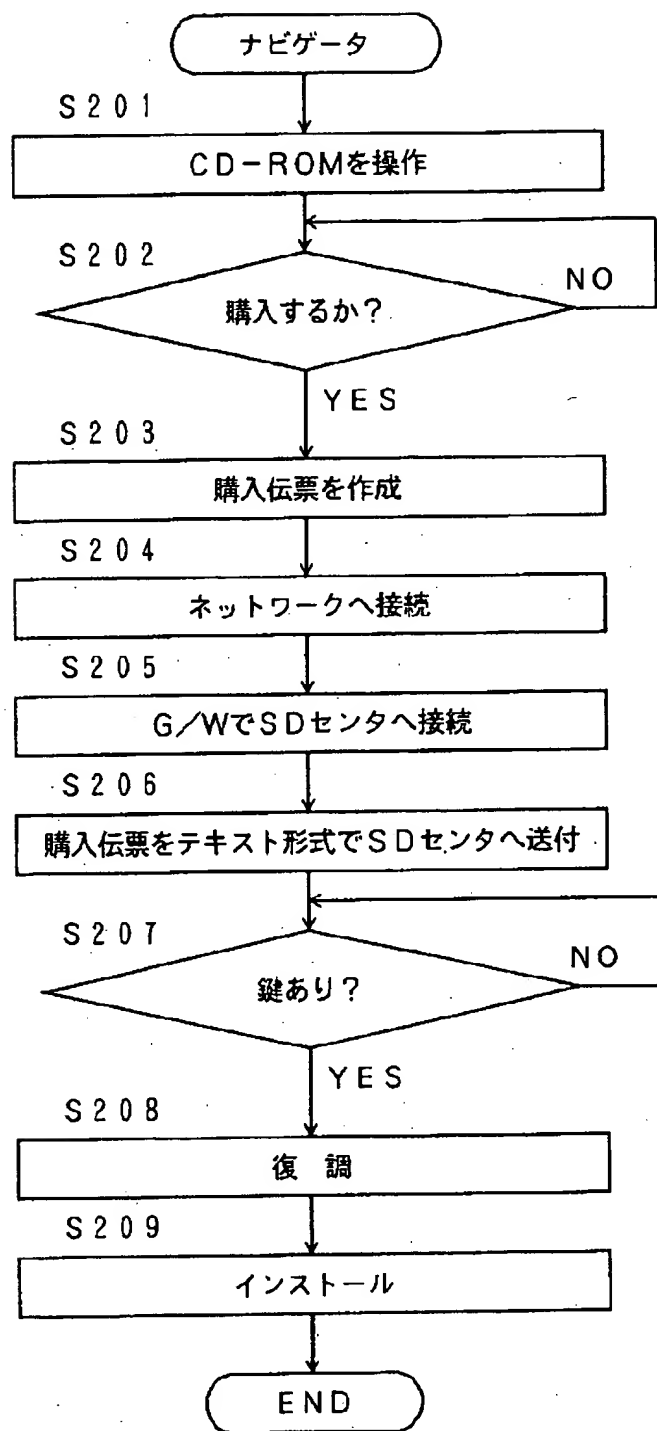
[Drawing 6]



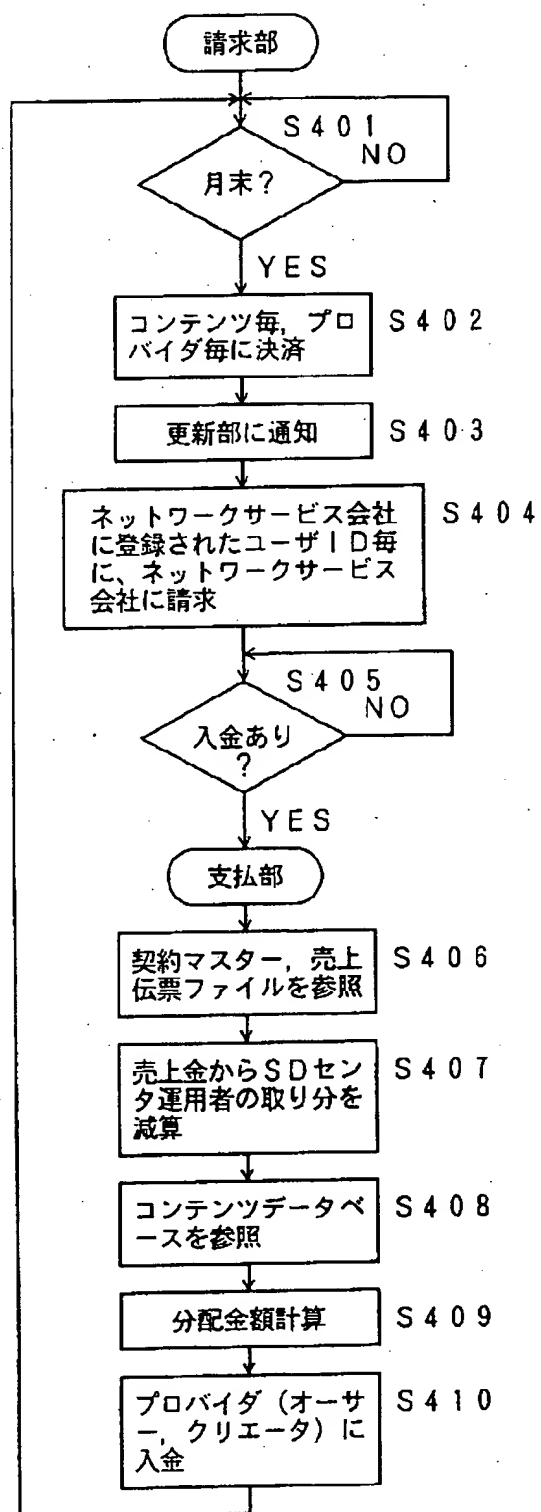
[Drawing 7]



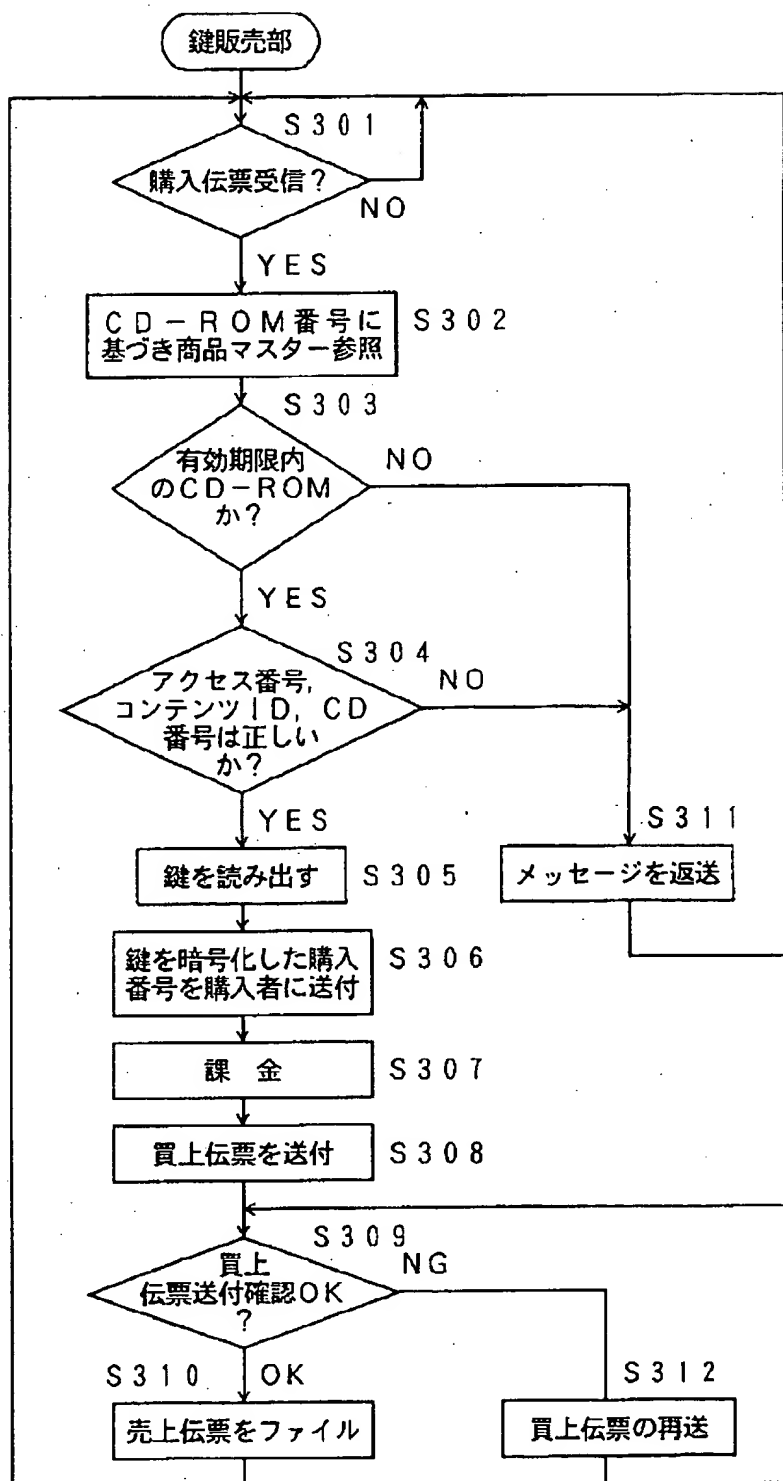
[Drawing 8]



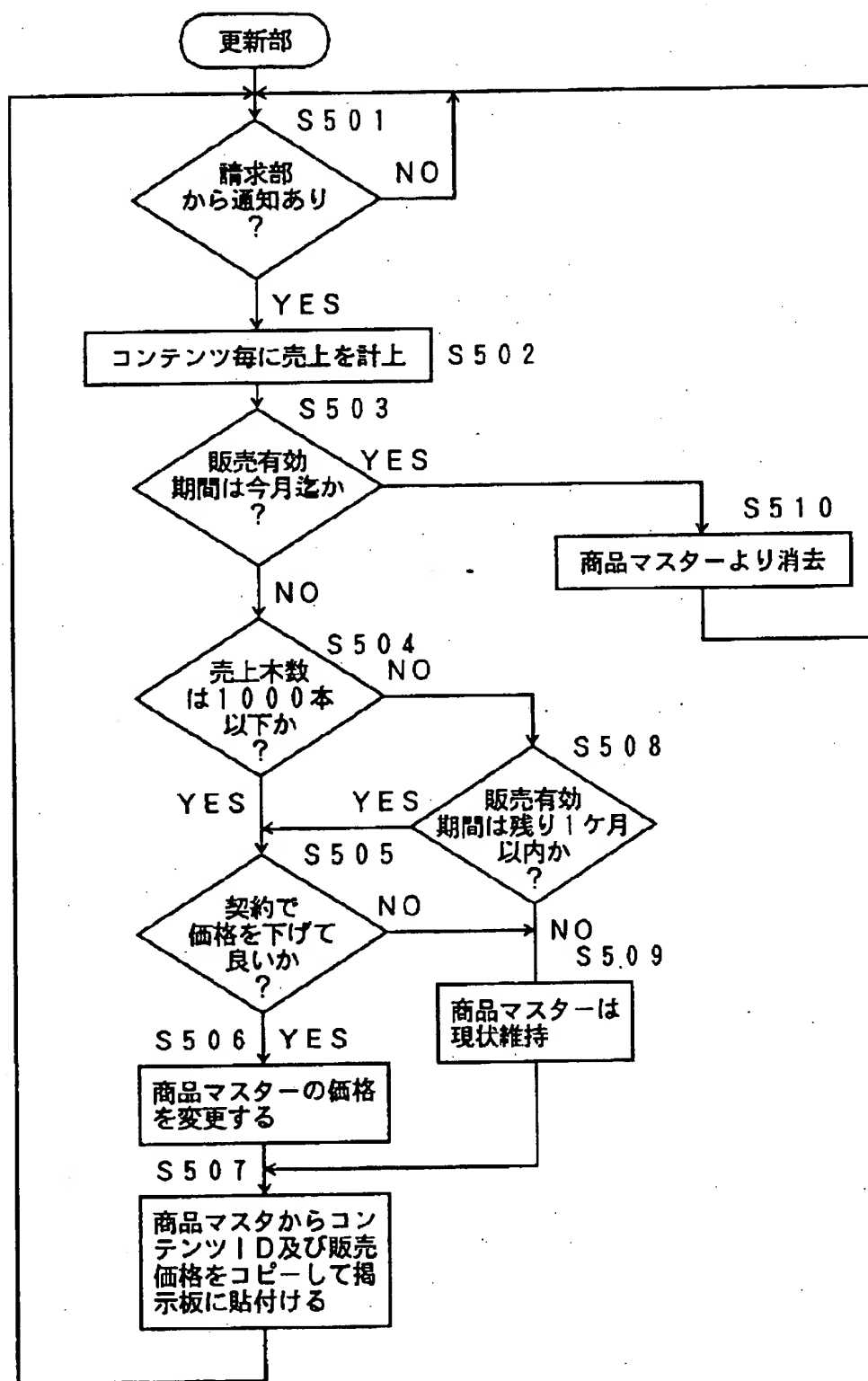
[Drawing 10]



[Drawing 9]



[Drawing 11]



(11) 特許出願公開番号

(43)公開日 平成9年(1997)3月18日

技術表示箇所

2

330

2

富士通株式会社

神奈川県川崎市中原区上小田中4丁目1番
1号

神奈川県川崎市中原区上小田中1015番
地 富士通株式会社内

神奈川県川崎市中原区上小田中 1015 番
地 富士通株式会社内

(74) 代理人 弁理士 遠山 勉 (外 1 名)

最終頁に続く

【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項 1】コンテンツの販売を行うコンテンツ流通システムにおけるコンテンツ販売価格課金システムであって、

各コンテンツについて設定された販売価格及び販売期間を記録した第 1 のデータベースと、

現時点を示す時計手段と、

少なくとも、前記時計手段によって示された現時点が前記第 1 のデータベースに記録されている前記販売期間内における所定期間である場合に、前記第 1 のデータベースに記録されている当該コンテンツについて設定された販売価格と異なる価格を採用する価格の更新手段と、
コンテンツを購入した者に対して、前記第 1 のデータベースに記録されている当該コンテンツの販売価格の課金を行う課金手段とを備えたことを特徴とするコンテンツ販売価格課金システム。

【請求項 2】前記更新手段は、当該コンテンツの販売総数が一定数以上であることを検出して前記販売価格を更新することを特徴とする請求項 1 記載のコンテンツ販売価格課金システム。

【請求項 3】前記更新手段は、前記第 1 のデータベースに記録されている当該コンテンツについて設定された販売価格を減額することを特徴とする請求項 1 又は 2 記載のコンテンツ販売価格課金システム。

【請求項 4】各コンテンツについて設定されたその販売価格の減額の可否に関する減額可否情報を記録した第 2 のデータベースを更に備えたとともに、

前記更新手段は、当該コンテンツについて前記第 2 のデータベースに記録されている前記減額可否情報が当該コンテンツの販売価格の減額が可能であると示すことをも、前記販売価格を更新するための条件とすることを特徴とする請求項 3 に記載のコンテンツ販売価格課金システム。

【請求項 5】前記更新手段は、一定期間毎に前記販売価格の変更を行うことを特徴とする請求項 1 記載のコンテンツ販売価格課金システム。

【請求項 6】前記更新手段は、前記時計手段によって示された現時点が前記第 1 のデータベースに記録されている前記販売期間の末日以降に当たる場合には、前記第 1 のデータベースに記録されている当該コンテンツについて設定された販売価格を消去することを特徴とする請求項 1 記載のコンテンツ販売価格課金システム。

【請求項 7】コンテンツの販売を行うコンテンツ流通システムにおけるコンテンツ販売価格課金方法であって、
予め、各コンテンツについて設定された販売価格及び販売期間を第 1 のデータベースに記録し、

この第 1 のデータベースに記録されている各コンテンツの販売期間と現時点とを比較し、現時点がその販売期間内における所定期間にあるコンテンツについては、前

し、

この変更した販売価格をコンテンツ購入者に課金することを特徴とするコンテンツ販売価格課金方法。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、コンテンツを暗号化して頒布するとともにこのコンテンツの購買を希望する者にはこのコンテンツを複合化するための鍵を供与することによってこのコンテンツの販売を行うコンテンツ流通システムにおけるコンテンツ販売価格課金システム及び課金方法に関する。

【0002】

【従来の技術】近年、CD-ROMドライブの普及に伴い、デジタル情報であるコンテンツ（映画、音楽作品、コンピュータプログラム、データベース、等のソフトウェア）のCD-ROM媒体による流通が盛んに行われている。これはCD-ROM媒体が非常に安価に製造でき、かつ500MBを越える大容量媒体であること、およびCD-ROMドライブの低価格・高速化による。さらに、CD-ROMは、その容量に比して軽量薄型であるので、雑誌に挟んでの流通等が可能だからである。

【0003】ところで、このCD-ROMに格納されるコンテンツは、デジタルデータであるため、容易に不正コピー・不正インストール（ここで、「インストール」とは、パソコンシステムのディスク装置にコンテンツを導入すること）される危険がある。従って、CD-ROMを用いたコンテンツ流通に際しても、このような不正コピー・不正インストールを防止可能であることが求められる。

【0004】そこで、従来より、CD-ROMにてコンテンツを流通させる場合には、数種類の試用版コンテンツ、及び暗号化された本物コンテンツをCD-ROM上に記録して流通させ、本物コンテンツの使用を希望するユーザに対してのみコンテンツの使用料納付（一括払い）と引き替えにこの本物コンテンツを復号化させるための鍵を教示するようにしていた。なお、以下の説明では、話を解り易くするために、コンテンツの使用料納付と引き替えに鍵を教示する事を「コンテンツを販売する」といい、コンテンツの使用料のことを「コンテンツの販売価格」という。

【0005】このような従来のコンテンツ流通システムにおいては、コンテンツの販売価格は常に一定であった。

【0006】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】しかしながら、例えば、ある程度の高価格での量販が可能な期間が自ずから限定されているコンテンツ（即ち、雑誌又は新聞のテキストデータのように情報の鮮度が重要なコンテンツ、クリスマスソングの音楽データやクリスマス映画のビデオ

テンツ) の場合には、コンテンツ流通システム運用者又はコンテンツ提供者は、その期間内にできるだけ大きい売上額を得たいと欲するものである。同様に、コンテンツ流通システム運用者がその販売を行うことが許されている期間が予め販売契約によって限定されているコンテンツの場合にも、コンテンツ流通システム運用者は、許可されている期間内にできるだけ大きい売上額を得たいと欲するものである。さらに、コンピュータプログラムのようにある程度の期間毎にバージョンアップが予定されているコンテンツの場合には、バージョンアップの直前には極端に販売数量が減少するので、コンテンツ流通システム運用者又はコンテンツ提供者は、販売価格を下げることににより販売数量の減少を少しでも緩和しようと欲するものである。

【 0 0 0 7 】本発明は、以上のような要求に応えるためになされたものであり、暗号化された状態のコンテンツを前記購買者に頒布するとともにこのコンテンツの購買を希望する購買者にはこのコンテンツを復号化するための鍵を供与することによってこのコンテンツの販売を行うコンテンツ流通システムの場合であっても、通常の小売店での店頭販売の場合と同様に、販売時期に応じてコンテンツの販売価格を更新することができる、コンテンツ販売価格課金システム及び課金方法を提供することを課題とする。

【 0 0 0 8 】

【課題を解決するための手段】本発明は、上記課題を解決するために、以下のような構成を採用した。即ち、本発明によるコンテンツ販売価格課金システムは、図 1 の原理図に示すように、コンテンツの販売を行うコンテンツ流通システムにおけるコンテンツ販売価格課金システムであって、各コンテンツについて設定された販売価格及び販売期間を記録した第 1 のデータベース (1 0 2) と、現時点を示す時計手段 (1 0 0) と、少なくとも、前記時計手段 (1 0 0) によって示された現時点が前記第 1 のデータベース (1 0 2) に記録されている前記販売期間内における所定期間である場合に、前記第 1 のデータベース (1 0 2) に記録されている当該コンテンツについて設定された販売価格と異なる価格を採用する価格の更新手段 (1 0 1) と、コンテンツを購入した者に対して、前記第 1 のデータベース (1 0 2) に記録されている当該コンテンツの販売価格の課金を行う課金手段 (1 0 3) とを備えたことを特徴とする (請求項 1 に対応) 。

【 0 0 0 9 】即ち、本発明によるコンテンツ販売価格課金システムによれば、第 1 のデータベース (1 0 2) には、各コンテンツについて設定された販売価格及び販売期間が記録されている。また、時計手段 (1 0 0) は現時点を示している。更新手段 (1 0 1) は、前記時計手段 (1 0 0) によって示された現時点が前記第 1 のデ

おける所定期間である場合には、前記第 1 のデータベース (1 0 2) に記録されている当該コンテンツについて設定された販売価格を更新する。課金手段 (1 0 3) は、コンテンツを購入した者に対して、前記第 1 のデータベース (1 0 2) に記録されている当該コンテンツの販売価格と (更新が行われた場合には更新後の販売価格) の課金を行う。

【 0 0 1 0 】ここで、コンテンツとはソフトウェアであり、プログラム、音楽データ、映画等のビデオデータを含む。このコンテンツは、アナログ形式であってもデジタル形式であっても良い。

【 0 0 1 1 】第 1 データベースは、物理的に単一のデータベースであっても良いし、夫々販売価格又は販売期間を記録した物理的に別個のデータベースであっても良い。時計手段は、少なくとも現在の日付けを示すものであれば良い。

【 0 0 1 2 】更新手段は、当該コンテンツの販売総数が一定数以上であることを検出して前記販売価格を更新しても良い (請求項 2 に対応) 。このようにすれば、販売期間の残りが長くても売上本数の伸びないコンテンツに合理的な販売価格を再設定し、このコンテンツの売上を伸ばすことができるようになる。

【 0 0 1 3 】また、更新手段は、前記第 1 のデータベースに記録されている当該コンテンツについて設定された販売価格を減額するようにしても良い (請求項 3 に対応) 。また、更新手段は、一定期間毎に前記販売価格の変更を行うようにしても良い (請求項 5 に対応) 。

【 0 0 1 4 】また、更新手段は、前記時計手段によって示された現時点が前記第 1 のデータベースに記録されている前記販売期間の末日以降に当たる場合には、前記第 1 のデータベースに記録されている当該コンテンツについて設定された販売価格を消去しても良い (請求項 6 に対応) 。このようなものも更新対象ではあるが、このようなものは既に販売不可能であるので、記載を抹消することにより第 1 のデータベースの容量を有効活用することができる。

【 0 0 1 5 】本発明によるコンテンツ販売価格課金システムに、以下の構成を加えても良い。即ち、各コンテンツについて設定されたその販売価格の減額の可否に関する減額可否情報を記録した第 2 のデータベースを更に備えても良い。この場合、前記更新手段は、当該コンテンツについて前記第 2 のデータベースに記録されている前記減額可否情報が当該コンテンツの販売価格の減額が可能であると示すことをも、前記販売価格を更新するための条件とすることができる (請求項 4 に対応) 。このようにすれば、コンテンツ提供者は、システム運用者との販売契約に際して、契約対象のコンテンツの販売価格の減額が可能かどうかを取り決めることができるので、このコンテンツ提供者の意志に反してコンテンツの販売価

【0016】また、本発明によるコンテンツ販売価格課金方法は、コンテンツの販売を行うコンテンツ流通システムにおけるコンテンツ販売価格課金方法であって、予め、各コンテンツについて設定された販売価格及び販売期間を第1のデータベースに記録し、この第1のデータベースに記録されている各コンテンツの販売期間と現時点とを比較し、現時点がその販売期間内における所定期間にあたるコンテンツについては、前記第1のデータベースに記録されている販売価格を変更し、この変更した価格をコンテンツ購入者に課金することを特徴とする（請求項7に対応）。

【0017】

【発明の実施の形態】以下に、図面に基づいて、本発明の実施の形態を説明する。

<コンテンツ流通システムの概略>図2は、本発明が実施されるコンテンツ流通システムの概略を示すブロック図である。この図2において、SDセンタ1は、コンテンツ流通システムの中心となる装置である。このSDセンタ1を運用する運用者は、このコンテンツ流通システムを利用したコンテンツ流通事業の経営者でもある。このSDセンタ1は、各種コンテンツの提供者（プロバイダ）2とコンテンツ受け入れ契約を結ぶとともに、このコンテンツ受け入れ契約に基づいてプロバイダ2からそのコンテンツを受け入れ、受け入れたコンテンツのうち販売を行うことが決定したものに対して販売契約を結び、販売されたコンテンツの売上金のうちの一部をプロバイダ2に分配する。また、場合により、SDセンタ1は、プロバイダ2以外のその他の権利者3との間でも販売契約を結ぶとともに、売上金のうちの一部の分配を行う。SDセンタ1は、販売契約を結んだコンテンツを暗号化して一枚の原盤CD-ROMに焼き付ける編集を行う。この編集に際しては、暗号化されたコンテンツを復号化するための一連の処理を実行するナビゲータ（プログラム）、及びこのナビゲータ用のインストラ（プログラム）も、共に焼き付けられる。このような編集を行った後に、SDセンタ1は、このCD-ROMの出版を、CD-ROM出版者4に依頼する。

【0018】SDセンタ1は、ゲートウェイ13を通じてネットワークサービス会社7に接続されているとともに、このネットワークサービス会社7及び図示せぬ公衆電話網を介してユーザ5のパソコン6に接続されている。SDセンタ1は、パソコン6からネットワークサービス会社7を介して送信されてきた購入伝票に対応して、購入伝票に示されたコンテンツを復号化するための鍵及び買上伝票を、ネットワークサービス会社7を介してユーザ5のパソコンに送信する。また、SDセンタ1は、このようにして販売されたコンテンツの代金を、ネットワークサービス会社7の請求代行部14に請求して回収する。

権者（オーサー）である。具体的には、あるコンテンツ（所謂一次的著作物、二次的著作物、映画の著作物、編集著作物）についての単独の著作権者、あるコンテンツについての共有著作権者全員、集合著作物における各構成部分についての著作権者全員、等が挙げられる。これらの者は当該コンテンツの直接の著作権者（所謂モダンオーサー）であり、これらの者との間で販売契約が締結されない限り、SDセンタ1は当該コンテンツの販売を行うことができないからである。これら各プロバイダ2は、夫々、ユニークなID（オーサリングID）を有している。

【0020】その他の権利者3は、プロバイダ2以外の第三者であって、当該コンテンツが複製された際にSDセンタ1に対して直接主張し得る権利を有する者、及び、コンテンツが複製された際にプロバイダ2に対して主張し得る債権（ランニングロヤリティの請求権等）を有する者である。前者の具体例としては、二次的著作物及び映画の著作物における原著作物の著作権者（所謂クラシカルオーサー）、映画の著作物に利用された著作物の著作権者、音楽著作物における実演家、編集著作物における各構成部分の著作権者が挙げられる。SDセンタ1は、これらの者の許諾がなければ当該コンテンツを複製することができないので、これらの者との間でも販売契約を締結しなければならない。また、後者の具体例としては、著作権者でない著作物（クリエイタ）であって著作権の移転に際して著作権者（プロバイダ2又は前者に該当する著作権者）との間でランニングロヤリティ支払いの契約を交わした者が挙げられる。SDセンタ1は、これらの者と販売契約を締結する必要がないので、これらの者にコンテンツの売上金を直接分配する必要も原則的にはない。しかし、事後的に、プロバイダ2は、自己に分配された分配金を、これらの者にランニングロヤリティとして分配しなければならない。従って、これらの者の取り分がSDセンタ1から直接分配されれば、プロバイダ2の労力が軽減される。これらその他の権利者3の夫々も、ユニークなID（クリエイタ等ID）を有している。

【0021】ネットワークサービス会社7とは、パソコン通信等のネットワークデータ通信サービスを提供する事業主体を示すとともに、そのホストコンピュータをも示す。ネットワークサービス会社7は、SDセンタ1の他、会員として登録されたユーザ5のパソコン6に対しても、このパソコン6からの接続要求に応じ、図示せぬ公衆電話網を介して接続される。そして、接続された各パソコン6及びSDセンタ1の間で、データ交換の各種サービスを実行するのである。なお、このネットワークサービス会社7に会員として登録されるためには、ユーザ5は、自己の有する有効なクレジットカードの番号を、サービス利用料の引き落とし用としてネットワーク

【 0 0 2 2 】また、ネットワークサービス会社 7 の請求代行部 1 4 は、SD センタ 1 からのコンテンツ代金の請求に応じ、この請求金額を、コンテンツ購入者である会員ユーザ 5 のサービス利用料に上乗せする。そして、この会員ユーザ 5 がその番号をネットワークサービス会社 7 に登録したクレジットカード会社 8 に対して、コンテンツ代金が上乗せされたサービス利用料を請求する。この請求に応じてクレジットカード会社 8 がサービス利用料を支払ってきた場合には、ネットワークサービス会社 7 は、本来のサービス利用料及び所定の手数料を控除し

て、残金を SD センタ 1 に納付する。
【 0 0 2 3 】クレジットカード会社 8 は、請求代行部 1 4 から請求されたサービス利用料をユーザ 5 (より正しくは、ユーザ 5 の銀行口座) から引き落とす。CD-ROM 出版者 4 は、SD センタ 1 から CD-ROM の出版委託を受け、SD センタ 1 から受け取った原盤 CD-ROM を大量に複製する。CD-ROM 出版者 4 は、このようにして複製した CD-ROM 1 1 を、ユーザ 5 に販売し、又は、ネットワークサービス会社 6 の登録会員であるユーザ 5 に無料送付する。

【 0 0 2 4 】ユーザ 5 は、CD-ROM 出版者 4 から入手した CD-ROM 1 1 を、自己のパソコン 6 にロードする。そして、CD-ROM 1 1 に格納されているインストーラを実行する。すると、インストーラは、ナビゲータ 1 0 をパソコン 6 のハードディスク 1 2 内にインストールするとともに、乱数の発生等によりマシン ID 5 0 を生成し、このマシン ID 5 0 をパソコン 6 のハードディスク 1 2 に書き込む。なお、このハードディスク 1 2 内に既にマシン ID 5 0 が生成されている場合には、インストーラは、新たなマシン ID 5 0 の生成を行わな

い。
【 0 0 2 5 】パソコン 6 内においてナビゲータ 1 0 が実行されると、ナビゲータ 1 0 は、復号部 9 を生成する。そして、ナビゲータ 1 0 は、ユーザ 5 からの入力に応じて、CD-ROM 1 1 内の試用版コンテンツの試用を可能とするとともに、ユーザ 5 が購入希望したコンテンツ購入用の購入伝票 (テキストデータ) を作成する。また、図示せぬ通信プログラムを利用して、ネットワークサービス会社 7 と接続し、更にゲートウェイ 1 3 を介して SD センタ 1 に接続し、作成した購入伝票を SD センタ 1 に送信する。なお、この購入伝票には、CD-ROM 番号 (各 CD-ROM の種類毎にユニーク) 及びコンテンツ ID (コンテンツ毎にユニーク) の他、CD-ROM 番号とコンテンツ ID とマシン ID とから生成され

たアクセス番号、及びネットワークサービス会社に登録されている当該ユーザ 5 の ID (以下、「ユーザ ID」という) が書き込まれる。このアクセス番号によって暗号化された鍵 (暗号化されたコンテンツを復調するための鍵) が SD センタ 1 から返送されてくると、ナビゲータ 1 0 は、記録されていたアクセス番号によって鍵を復号して、復号部 9 に渡す。復号部 9 は、ユーザ 5 が購入希望しているコンテンツ (暗号化されたコンテンツ) を CD-ROM 1 1 から読み出して、鍵を用いて複合化し、複合化されたコンテンツをハードディスク 1 2 に格納する。

<SD センタ 1 の具体的構成>次に、図 3 を用いて SD センタ 1 の詳細な内部構成説明を行う。図 3 においてコンテンツ受入部 1 5 は、プロバイダ 2 との間でコンテンツ受入契約を結ぶ。これは、SD センタ 1 によるコンテンツ流通システムを介して当該コンテンツを将来流通させる準備として SD センタ 1 が当該コンテンツを預かるという旨の契約である。そして、このコンテンツ受入契約締結の効果として、コンテンツ受入部 1 5 は、コンテンツを受け入れる。そして、受け入れたコンテンツの ID (コンテンツ ID) を生成し、このコンテンツ ID とともに当該コンテンツをコンテンツデータベース 2 1 に格納する。また、コンテンツ受入部 1 5 は、このコンテンツに関するプロバイダ情報をも、コンテンツデータベース 2 1 に格納する。このプロバイダ情報とは、コンテンツ受入契約の当事者であるプロバイダ (オーナー) 2 の ID (オーナー ID)、プロバイダ 2 以外の者であるが当該コンテンツの販売契約の締結が必要な者の ID、及びコンテンツの販売契約の締結は必要ないがプロバイダ 2 に対して当該コンテンツの販売に関してランニングロイヤリティの請求権を有する者の ID である。これら各者の ID が、プロバイダ 2 の ID (オーナー ID) を最上位層として、コンテンツデータベース 2 1 内に階層的に格納されるのである。なお、これら各者の間に取分の取り決めがある場合には、取り決められた各者の取分についての情報も、プロバイダ情報として、コンテンツデータベース 2 1 内に格納する。

【 0 0 2 6 】このプロバイダ情報の具体例を、以下に示す。なお、以下の各例において、アルファベットはプロバイダ等の ID を示し、記号 “*” は該当者がいるがその特定がなされていないことを示す。【具体例 1】

【 0 0 2 7 】

【表 1】

オーナー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
A (映画製作者)		B (原作者) C (脚本家) D (画家)		E (映画監督)	

【0028】表1は、コンテンツが映画の著作物である場合における例である。この場合には、プロバイダ2たる著作権者（オーサー）は映画製作者A一人だけであるが、原作者B、脚本家C、及び作品中に使用される絵を描いた画家Dも、所謂クラシカルオーサー等として、販売契約を要する当事者となっている。また、著作権者である映画監督Eは、コンテンツ販売に伴って映画製作者A

からランニングロヤリティを受け取る旨の契約を交わしているものとする。但し、この場合には、上記した各者間で取分の取り決めを行っていないので、各者の取分は等分として扱われる。

〔具体例2〕

【0029】

〔表2〕

オーサー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
F (共有著作権者) G (共有著作権者)					

【0030】表2は、コンテンツが共同著作に係るものであって著作権者が著作権者のままでいる場合における例である。この場合にも、各共有著作権者F、Gの取分（持分）の取り決めはなされていないので、両者の取分

（持分）は等分として扱われる。

〔具体例3〕

【0031】

〔表3〕

オーサー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
H (共有著作権者) I (共有著作権者)	0.7 0.3				

【0032】表3は、各共有著作権者H、I間に取分（持分）の取り決めがある場合における例である。この場合には取分（持分）の取り決めがあるので、売上金の分配時には、Hに売上金の7割、Iに売上金の3割が夫

々支払われる。

〔具体例4〕

【0033】

〔表4〕

オーサー	取分	契約を要する者	取分	その他のクリエイター	取分
J (代表者)		*			

【0034】表4は、代表者Jのみが明示されているとともに、この代表者Jの他に販売契約を要する当事者が存在していることが示されている場合における例である。この場合には、SDセンタ1は、代表者Jしか見えないので、この代表者一人にのみ売上金を支払えば良い（代表者Jは、SDセンタ1の関与とは関わりなく、明示されていないその他の権利者にこの売上金を分配する義務を負う。）。但し、SDセンタ1は、販売契約を締結する場合には、記号“*”により代表者J以外の権利者をも契約の当事者としなければならないことを知ることができる。

【0035】CD-ROM編集部16は、市場分析を行って、コンテンツデータベース21内に既に格納されているコンテンツ群の中からCD-ROMに掲載すべきものを特定し、この特定されたコンテンツに関して、そのプロバイダ2及び契約当事者とすべきその他の権利者

を除く）3との間で販売契約を締結する。この販売契約においては、プロバイダ2及び契約当事者たるその他の権利者3のID、コンテンツID、販売価格、販売有効期間（何時から何時まで販売できるか）、支払いサイト（プロバイダ2とSDセンタ1運用者との間における売上金の分配率）、販売価格の値引きの可否（販売価格の減額の可否に関する減額可否情報）、等が取り決められる。CD-ROM編集部16は、この販売契約の内容を第2のデータベースとしての契約マスター22に格納する。

【0036】また、CD-ROM編集部16は、販売契約が締結されたコンテンツを特定の鍵を用いて暗号化し、原盤CD-ROMに書き込む。また、このCD-ROMには、上述したCD-ROM番号、ナビゲータ（プログラム）、及びインストラも、書き込まれる。CD-ROM編集部16は、CD-ROM出版者4に対し、

OMの出版委託をする。また、CD-ROM編集部16は、この原盤CD-ROMのCD-ROM番号及びその有効期間、並びに、この原盤CD-ROMに書き込まれたコンテンツのコンテンツID、販売価格、販売有効期間、鍵、等を、第1のデータベースとしての商品マスター23に書き込む。

【0037】鍵販売部17は、ユーザ5のパソコン6から送付された購入伝票を受け取り、この購入伝票に書かれたCD-ROM番号、コンテンツID、及びアクセス番号を、商品マスター23を参照してチェックする。そして、CD-ROM11自体の有効期限が過ぎていたり、コンテンツの有効販売期間が過ぎていたり、これら番号又はIDに該当するものが商品マスター23内になかった場合には、エラーメッセージを出力する。それ以外の場合には、対応する鍵を商品マスター23から読み出し、この鍵をアクセス番号によって暗号化し、この暗号化の結果得られたデータを購入番号としてユーザ5のパソコン6に返送する。この購入番号の送付とともに、鍵販売部17は、課金を行う。即ち、販売したコンテンツの販売価格を商品マスター23から読み出し、コンテンツID及びその販売価格を売上伝票に記載してユーザ5のパソコン6に送付するとともに、同じ事項及び購入者たるユーザ5のユーザIDを記載した売上げ伝票を売上げ伝票ファイル24に蓄積するのである。

【0038】なお、この鍵販売部17内には、商品マスター23内に格納された各コンテンツのID、そのタイトル、及びその販売価格がコピーされる掲示板42が内蔵されている。この掲示板42は、パソコン6のナビゲータ10により、ユーザ5から観くことが可能となっている。

【0039】課金手段としての請求部18は、毎月末に売上伝票ファイル24を参照して、コンテンツ毎及びプロバイダ毎に販売数を決済し、その決済結果を更新部20に通知する。また、請求部18は、ユーザ5のユーザID毎に売上げ金額を集計して、ネットワークサービス会社7の請求代行部14へその売上金の一括請求を行う。請求代行部14がこの売上金請求に応じて売上金を納付した場合には、請求部18はその旨を支払部19に通知する。

【0040】支払部19の内部構成を図4に示す。支払部19を構成するコンテンツ売上金算出部25は、請求部18から通知を受けると、売上げ伝票参照部29に対して、記録手段としての売上伝票ファイル24中に蓄積された売上伝票の読み出しを指示する。算出手段としてのコンテンツ売上金算出部25は、読み出した売上伝票に基づいて各コンテンツ毎の売上金額を集計し、運用者取分減算部26に通知する。

【0041】運用者取分減算部26は、コンテンツ売上

22中に記載されている各コンテンツの支払サイトの読み出しを指示する。運用者取分減算部26は、各コンテンツ毎に、支払サイトによって定まるSDセンタ1の運用者の取り分を売上金から減算し、売上金分配計算部27に通知する。

【0042】売上金分配計算部27は、運用者取分減算部26から減算後の売上金の通知を受けると、コンテンツデータベース参照部31に対して、コンテンツデータベース21に記載されている各コンテンツのプロバイダ情報の読み出しを指示する。売上金分配計算部27は、各コンテンツ毎に、プロバイダ情報としてそのIDが記載されている各プロバイダ（オーナー）2及びその他の権利者3の間で、通知された売上金を分配する。この際、プロバイダ情報中に各プロバイダ（オーナー）2及びその他の権利者3の取分の定めがある場合には、その取分に応じて売上金を分配し、取分の定めがない場合には、各者に対して均等に分配する。売上金分配計算部27は、各ID（プロバイダ2又はその他の権利者3のものとして登録されているID）毎に売上金を集計し、入金処理部28に通知する。

【0043】入金処理部28は、各ID毎に集計された売上金に対する入金処理を行う。即ち、このIDに基づいて各プロバイダ2及びその他の権利者3の銀行口座を特定し、この特定された銀行口座へ、集計された売上金を入金する。

【0044】更新部20の内部構成を図5に示す。更新部20を構成するコンテンツ売上高計算部32は、請求部18から各コンテンツ毎の売上数について通知を受けると、売上伝票参照部38に対して、売上伝票ファイル24中の売上伝票に記載された販売価格の読み出しを指示する。コンテンツ売上高計算部32は、請求部18から通知された各コンテンツ毎の売上数及び売上伝票に記載された販売価格に基づいて、各コンテンツ毎の売上高を計上する。

【0045】販売期間チェック部33は、商品マスター参照部39に対して、商品マスター23内に記載された各コンテンツの販売期間の読み出しを指示する。この販売期間チェック部33には、また、時計部（時計手段）40からの現在日付情報が入力される。販売期間チェック部33は、販売期間の末日が現在日付と同月となっているコンテンツを探し出し、商品マスター更新部36に通知する。また、販売期間チェック部33は、現在日付から販売期間の末日まで残り1月以内となっているコンテンツ（即ち、現時点とその販売期間内における所定時点以降に当たるコンテンツ）を探し出し、契約内容チェック部35に通知する。さらに、販売期間チェック部33は、それ以外のコンテンツをコンテンツ売上数チェック部35に通知する。コンテンツ売上数チェック部35は、請求部18から通知された各コンテンツ毎の販売

コンテンツの中から月当たりの販売総数が1000本以下であるコンテンツを探し出し、契約内容チェック部34に通知する。

【0046】契約内容チェック部35は、販売期間チェック部33又はコンテンツ売上数チェック部34からコンテンツの通知を受けると、契約マスター参照部41に対して、通知されたコンテンツについての契約内容を契約マスター22の中から読み出すよう指示する。契約内容チェック部35は、読み出した契約内容に基づいて、上記通知を受けたコンテンツのなかから、契約によって販売価格の値引きが認められているものを探し出し、商品マスター更新部36に通知する。

【0047】商品マスター更新部36は、販売期間チェック部33から直接通知を受けたコンテンツに関しては、商品マスター23からそのデータを削除する。また、契約内容チェック部35から通知を受けたコンテンツに関しては、商品マスター23内に記載された販売価格を安価な価格に書き換える。即ち、これら販売期間チェック部33、コンテンツ売上数チェック部34、契約内容チェック部35、及び商品マスター更新部36が、更新手段に相当する。

【0048】掲示板替換部37は、商品マスター23内に記載されている全コンテンツについて、各々のコンテンツID、そのタイトル、及びその販売価格をコピーし、鍵販売部17の掲示板42に上書きする。

<コンテンツ流通システムの概略>本実施形態におけるコンテンツ流通システムによってコンテンツが販売されるまでの流れを、図6乃至図11のフローチャートを参照して説明する。

【SDセンタのコンテンツ受入部におけるコンテンツ受け入れ】図6は、SDセンタ1のコンテンツ受入部15において実行されるコンテンツ受け入れのための処理を示す。

【0049】図6における最初のS001では、SDセンタ1の運用者とプロバイダ2の間でコンテンツ受入契約が締結されたか否かをチェックする。そして、コンテンツ受入契約が締結された場合には、S002において、コンテンツの受け入れを行う。即ち、図示せぬドライバ装置又は通信インタフェースを介して、コンテンツの入力を行う。

【0050】次のS003では、S002にて受け入れたコンテンツを、コンテンツデータベース21に格納する。次のS004では、S003にてコンテンツデータベースに格納したコンテンツに付されるコンテンツID、及び上述したプロバイダ情報（プロバイダ2のオーサリングID、その他の権利者3のID、これら各者の取り分）を、生成する。

【0051】次のS005では、S004にて生成され

【SDセンタのCD-ROM編集部におけるCD-ROM編集】図7は、SDセンタ1のCD-ROM編集部16において実行されるCD-ROM編集のための処理を示す。

【0052】図7における最初のS101では、オペレータからの命令に従ってCD-ROMの編集作業を開始する。次のS102では、コンテンツデータベース22を参照し、編集コンセプトに合致した良いコンテンツが成るかどうかを調べる。次のS103では、コンテンツデータベース22内から探し出したコンテンツの出版が決定されたかどうかをチェックする。そして、出版の決定がなされなかったのであれば、他のコンテンツを探すべく、処理をS102に戻す。これに対して、出版の決定がなされたのであれば、処理をS104に進める。

【0053】S104では、プロバイダ2（及び当該コンテンツに関するその他の権利者3）との間で、出版決定がなされたコンテンツに対する契約締結作業を実行する。次のS105では、S104にて締結され販売契約に基づいて、契約マスター22を作成する。

【0054】次のS106では、当該コンテンツを掲載するCD-ROMの番号及びその有効期間、コンテンツID、販売価格、及び販売有効期間から商品マスター23を作成する。

【0055】次のS107では、販売契約がなされたコンテンツを特定の鍵によって暗号化する。この暗号化に用いられた鍵も、商品マスター23に格納される。次のS108では、原盤CD-ROMに、暗号化が済んだ本物コンテンツ、及び機能制限がなされた試用版コンテンツ、ナビゲーター（プログラム）、及びインストーラを焼き付ける。

【0056】次のS109では、完成した原盤CD-ROMをCD-ROM出版者4に送付して出版依頼を行う。なお、CD-ROM出版者4は、この出版依頼に応じ、原盤CD-ROMに基づいて多数のCD-ROM11を作成し、ユーザ5に販売したり、ネットワークサービス会社7に登録された会員であるユーザ5に送付する。そして、このCD-ROM11を入手したユーザ5が、CD-ROM11をパソコン6にロードして、CD-ROM11内のインストーラを実行すると、ナビゲータ（プログラム）10がハードディスク12にインストールされるとともに、個々のパソコン毎にユニークなマシンIDが生成されてハードディスク12内に書き込まれる。

【ナビゲータによるコンテンツ購入処理】図8は、パソコン6にインストールされたナビゲータ10により実行されるコンテンツ購入処理を示す。

【0057】図8における最初のS201では、ユーザ5からの操作に応じて、CD-ROM11を操作する。例えば、CD-ROM11に格納されている購入受付メ

テンツを試用状態とさせる。

【0058】次のS202では、ユーザ5が何れかのコンテンツの購入を決定するのを待つ。コンテンツの購入が決定された場合に実行されるS203では、CD-ROM11のCD-ROM番号及び購入決定されたコンテンツのコンテンツIDに基づいて、アクセス番号を生成する。そして、これらCD-ROM番号、コンテンツID、及びアクセス番号、並びに、当該ユーザ5のユーザIDに基づいて、テキストデータ形式の購入伝票を作成する。なお、生成したアクセス番号については、図示せぬメモリ内に保持しておく。

【0059】次のS204では、図示せぬ通信プログラムを起動し、公衆電話網経由でネットワークサービス会社7に接続する。次のS205では、ゲートウェイ13を通じて、SDセンタ1の鍵販売部17に接続する。

【0060】次のS206では、S203にて作成した購入伝票を、鍵販売部17に対してテキスト形式でファイル送信する。次のS207では、この購入伝票に応じて鍵販売部17が鍵(購入番号)を送付してくるのを待つ。

【0061】次のS208では、鍵販売部17が送付してきた購入番号を、図示せぬメモリ内に保持していたアクセス番号に基づいて復調し、鍵を取り出す。そして、ユーザ5が購入決定した暗号化コンテンツを、この鍵を用いて複合化する。

【0062】次のS209では、この複合化されたコンテンツを、ハードディスク12内にインストールする。以上により、このナビゲータ10の処理が終了する。

【SDセンタの鍵販売部での販売処理】図9は、SDセンタ1の鍵販売部17で実行されるコンテンツ販売のための処理を示す。

【0063】図9における最初のS301では、ユーザ5からの購入伝票の受信を待つ。購入伝票が受信されたときに実行されるS302では、購入伝票に記載されたCD-ROM番号に基づいて商品マスター23を参照する。

【0064】次のS303では、S302にて参照した商品マスター23に記載されているCD-ROMの有効期間に基づいて、購入伝票に記載されたCD-ROM番号に対応するCD-ROMが現在有効期間内であるか否かをチェックする。そして、現在有効期間内でない場合には、S311において、有効期限切れである旨のメッセージをユーザ5のパソコン6に返送し、次の購入伝票を待つために処理をS301に戻す。

【0065】現在CD-ROMの有効期間内である場合に実行されるS304では、S302にて参照した商品マスター23に基づいて、購入伝票に記載されたCD-ROM番号、コンテンツIDがこの商品マスター23に

否かをチェックする。そして、購入伝票に記載されたCD-ROM番号及びコンテンツIDが商品マスター23に記載されているものと一致していない場合、及びアクセス番号が論理的に正しくない場合には、S311において、その旨を表すメッセージをユーザ5のパソコン6に返送し、次の購入伝票を待つために処理をS301に戻す。なお、上述したように、販売期間を過ぎたコンテンツのコンテンツIDは、更新部20によって商品マスター23から削除されるので、そのコンテンツIDが購入伝票に記載されている場合には、このステップにより排除される。

【0066】一方、CD-ROM番号、コンテンツID、及びアクセス番号が何れも正しい場合には、S305において、商品マスター23から鍵(コンテンツIDに対応するコンテンツを暗号化するのに用いられた鍵)を読み出す。

【0067】次のS306では、S305にて読み出した鍵をアクセス番号によって暗号化し、ユーザ5のパソコン6に返送する。次のS307では、課金処理を実行する。即ち、上述したようにして、買上伝票及び売上伝票を作成する。

【0068】次のS308では、S307にて作成した買上伝票を、ユーザ5のパソコン6に送付する。次のS309では、S308での買上伝票送付が良好であったか否かを確認する。そして、不良であったならば、S312にて買上伝票の再送付を行って、処理をS309に戻す。

【0069】これに対して、買上伝票送付が良好であった場合に実行されるS310では、S307にて作成した売上伝票を売上伝票ファイル24にファイルする。以上により、一枚の購入伝票に対する処理が終了したので、次の購入伝票を待つために処理をS301に戻す。

【SDセンタの請求部での請求処理】図10は、SDセンタ1の請求部18で実行される請求処理、及び支払部19で実行される支払処理を示す。

【0070】図10における最初のS401では、現在日付が月末であるか否かをチェックし、月末になるのを待つ。そして、現在日付が月末になった場合には、S402において、売上伝票ファイル24内に蓄積された全売上伝票を読み出し、コンテンツ毎、及びプロバイダ2毎に売上伝票の枚数を決済する。

【0071】次のS403では、コンテンツ毎の売上伝票枚数を更新部20に通知する。次のS404では、読み出した売上伝票を、ネットワークサービス会社7に登録されたユーザID毎にまとめ、このユーザID毎に売上金額を集計する。そして、集計された各ユーザID毎の売上金額を、ネットワークサービス会社7に請求する。この請求を受けると、ネットワークサービス会社7の請求代行部14は、各ユーザ5のサービス利用料にこ

8に請求する。請求を受けたクレジットカード会社8は、各ユーザ5の銀行口座からこの請求金額を引き落として、ネットワークサービス会社7の請求代行部14に支払う。請求代行部14は、支払われた金額から各ユーザ5毎のサービス利用料及び所定の手数料を控除し、SDセンタ1に納付する。

【0072】図10のS405では、ネットワークサービス会社7の請求代行部14からの納付を待ち、納付があった場合には、処理を支払部19に渡す。

【SDセンタの支払部での支払処理】SDセンタ1の支払部19は、図10のS406において、契約マスター22及び売上伝票ファイル24を参照する。次のS407では、売上金からSDセンタ1の運用者の取り分を減算する。即ち、売上伝票ファイル24に蓄積された売上伝票を各コンテンツ毎に分け、各コンテンツ毎に、全売上伝票に記載されている販売価格を集計する。一方、契約マスター22に記載されている支払サイトの記載から、SDセンタ1の運用者の取り分率を読み出す。そして、集計された各コンテンツ毎の売上金からSDセンタ1の運用者の取り分を減算するのである。

【0073】次のS408では、コンテンツデータベース21を参照する。即ち、各コンテンツ毎に、プロバイダ情報を読み出す。次のS409では、分配金を計算を行う。即ち、各コンテンツのプロバイダ情報に記載されている各ID（単数又は複数のプロバイダ2のID、若しくは、単数又は複数のプロバイダ2のID及び単数又は複数のその他の権利者3のID）毎に、減算後の売上金の分配を行うのである。この場合、プロバイダ情報に各者2、3の取り分が記載されていないのであれば、各IDに均等に売上金を分配するが、プロバイダ情報に各者2、3が取り分が記載されている場合には、この取り分の記載に従って売上金を分配する。

【0074】次のS410では、S409にて分配された売上金を、各ID2、3に従って、各プロバイダ2及びその他の権利者3の銀行口座に入金する。その後、翌月の請求処理のために、処理を請求部18でのS401に戻す。

【SDセンタの更新部での更新処理】図11は、SDセンタ1の更新部20で実行される商品マスター23の更新処理を示す。

【0075】図11における最初のS501では、請求部18から各コンテンツ毎の売上伝票枚数の通知を待つ。売上伝票枚数の通知があった場合に実行されるS502では、コンテンツ毎に売り上げを計上する。

【0076】次のS503では、商品マスター23に記載された各コンテンツの販売有効期間を参照して、販売有効期間の末日が今月までのものがあるかどうかをチェックする。そして、販売有効期間の末日が今月までのコンテンツについては、S510において、そのコン

【0077】これに対して、販売有効期間の末日が今月まででないコンテンツについては、S504において、その今月の売上本数が1000本以下であるかどうかをチェックする。そして、売上本数が1000本以下のコンテンツについては、S505の処理を実行する。

【0078】これに対して、売上本数が1000本を超えるコンテンツについては、S508において、再度商品マスター23に記載された各コンテンツの販売有効期間を参照して、販売有効期間の残りが1月以内であるかどうかをチェックする。そして、販売有効期間の残りが1月を超えているコンテンツについては、商品マスター23は現状維持として（S509）、処理をS507に進める。また、販売有効期間の残りが1月以内であるコンテンツについては、S505の処理を実行する。

【0079】S505では、契約マスター22に記載されている各コンテンツについての契約内容を調べ、処理対象コンテンツの販売価格の値引きが認められているかどうかをチェックする。そして、値引きが認められていない場合には、商品マスター23は現状維持として（S509）、処理をS507に進める。これに対して、値引きが認められている場合には、S506において、商品マスター23に記載されている処理対象コンテンツの販売価格を一定率値引きし、処理をS507に進める。

【0080】S507では、商品マスター23から全コンテンツのコンテンツID及び販売価格をコピーし、販売部17の掲示板42に貼り付ける。その後、請求部18からの次の通知を待つために、処理をS501に戻す。

【0081】以上のように構成されたコンテンツ流通システムによると、コンテンツを販売して得られた分配金のうち、SDセンタ1の運用者の取り分を除いた残金は、プロバイダ2以外の当該コンテンツに因して何らかの請求権を有している者3に対しても分配される。従って、代表者たるプロバイダ2が一括して売上金の支払を受けた後にこれら請求権を有する者3に売上金の再分配をするといった、煩雑な作業が省略できる。また、販売有効期間が残り1月以内となったものや月当たりの売上数が一定量以下に落ち込んだコンテンツについては、販売契約によって値引きが認められていることを条件に、販売価格を下げるができる。その結果、季節商品のように販売可能な期間が限定されているコンテンツやSDセンタ1が販売許可されている期間が限定されているコンテンツについて、販売期間の末期に販売価格の値引きによって売上が喚起して、期間内の売上金額を向上させることができる。同様に、売上数が落ち込んでいるコンテンツについて、値引きにより合理的な販売価格設定を行い、売上数及び売上金額を向上させることができる。

【0082】

ツ販売価格課金システム及び課金方法によれば、暗号化された状態のコンテンツを前記購買者に頒布するとともにこのコンテンツの購買を希望する購買者にはこのコンテンツを復号化するための鍵を供与することによってこのコンテンツの販売を行うコンテンツ流通システムの場合であっても、通常の小売店での店頭販売の場合と同様に、販売時期に応じてコンテンツの販売価格を更新することができる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図 1】本発明の原理図

【図 2】本発明の第 1 の実施形態によるコンテンツ流通システムの概略図

【図 3】図 2 の S D センタ 1 の詳細な構成を示すブロック図

【図 4】図 3 の支払部の詳細な構成を示すブロック図

【図 5】図 3 の更新部の詳細な構成を示すブロック図

【図 6】図 3 のコンテンツ受入部において実行されるコンテンツ受入処理を示すフローチャート

【図 7】図 3 の C D - R O M 編集部において実行される

C D - R O M 編集処理を示すフローチャート

【図 8】図 2 のナビゲータが実行するコンテンツ購入処理を示すフローチャート

【図 9】図 3 の鍵販売部において実行される鍵販売処理を示すフローチャート

【図 10】図 3 の請求部において実行される請求処理及び支払部において実行される支払処理を示すフローチャート

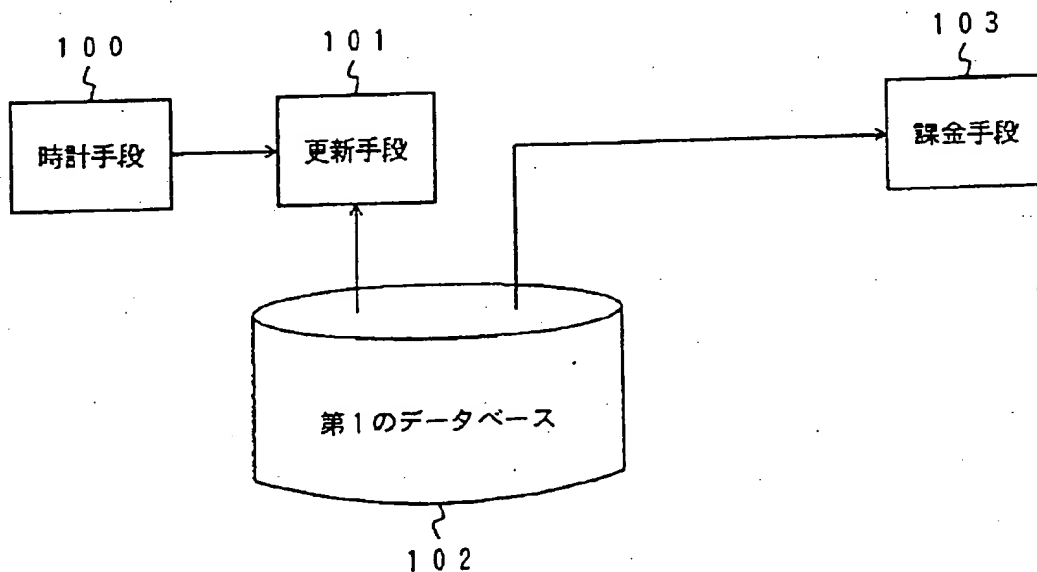
【図 11】図 3 の更新部において実行される更新処理を

10 示すフローチャート

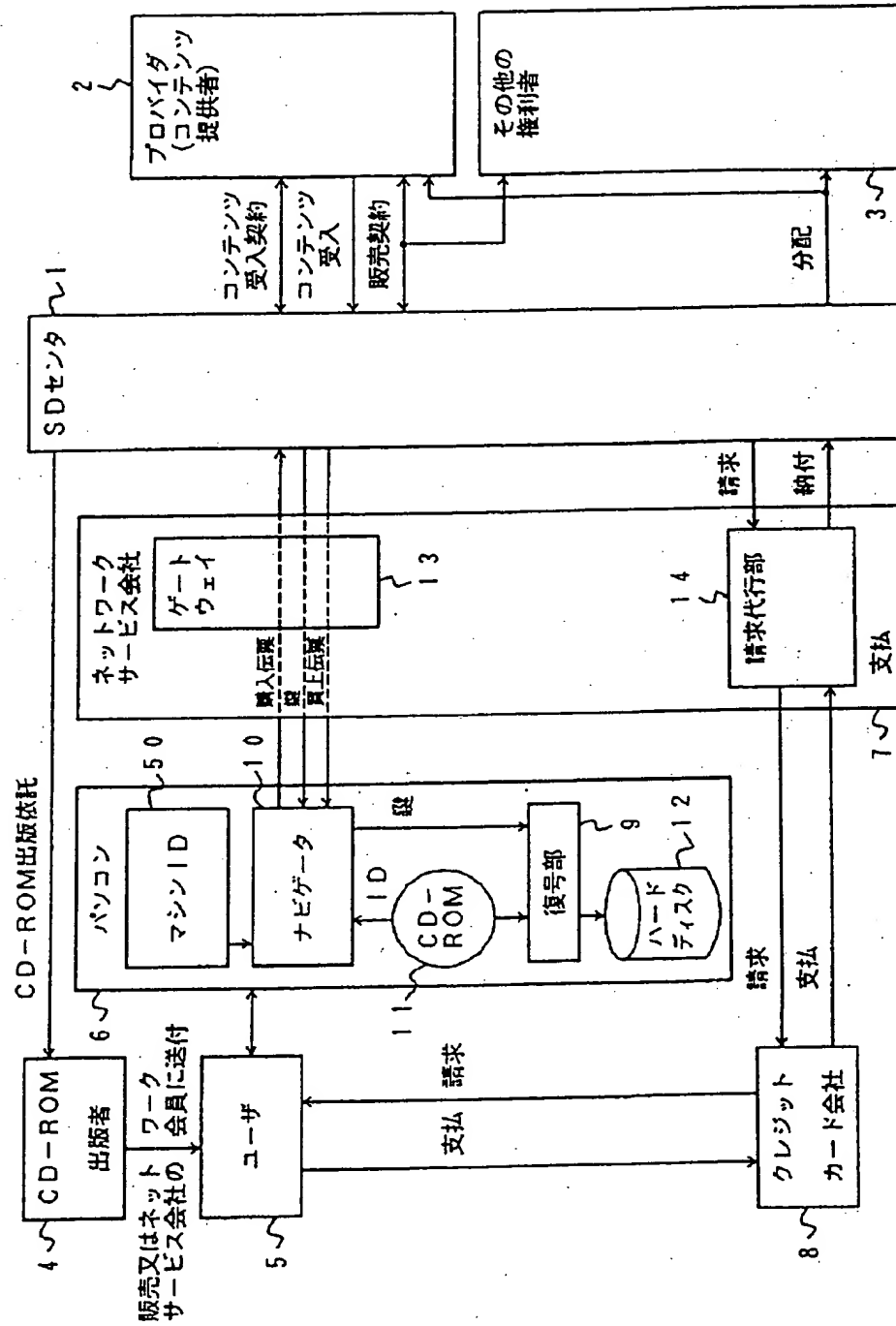
【符号の簡単な説明】

- | | |
|-----|-------------|
| 1 | S D センタ |
| 1 7 | 鍵販売部 |
| 1 8 | 請求部 |
| 1 9 | 支払部 |
| 2 0 | 更新部 |
| 2 1 | コンテンツデータベース |
| 2 2 | 契約マスター |
| 2 4 | 売上伝票ファイル |

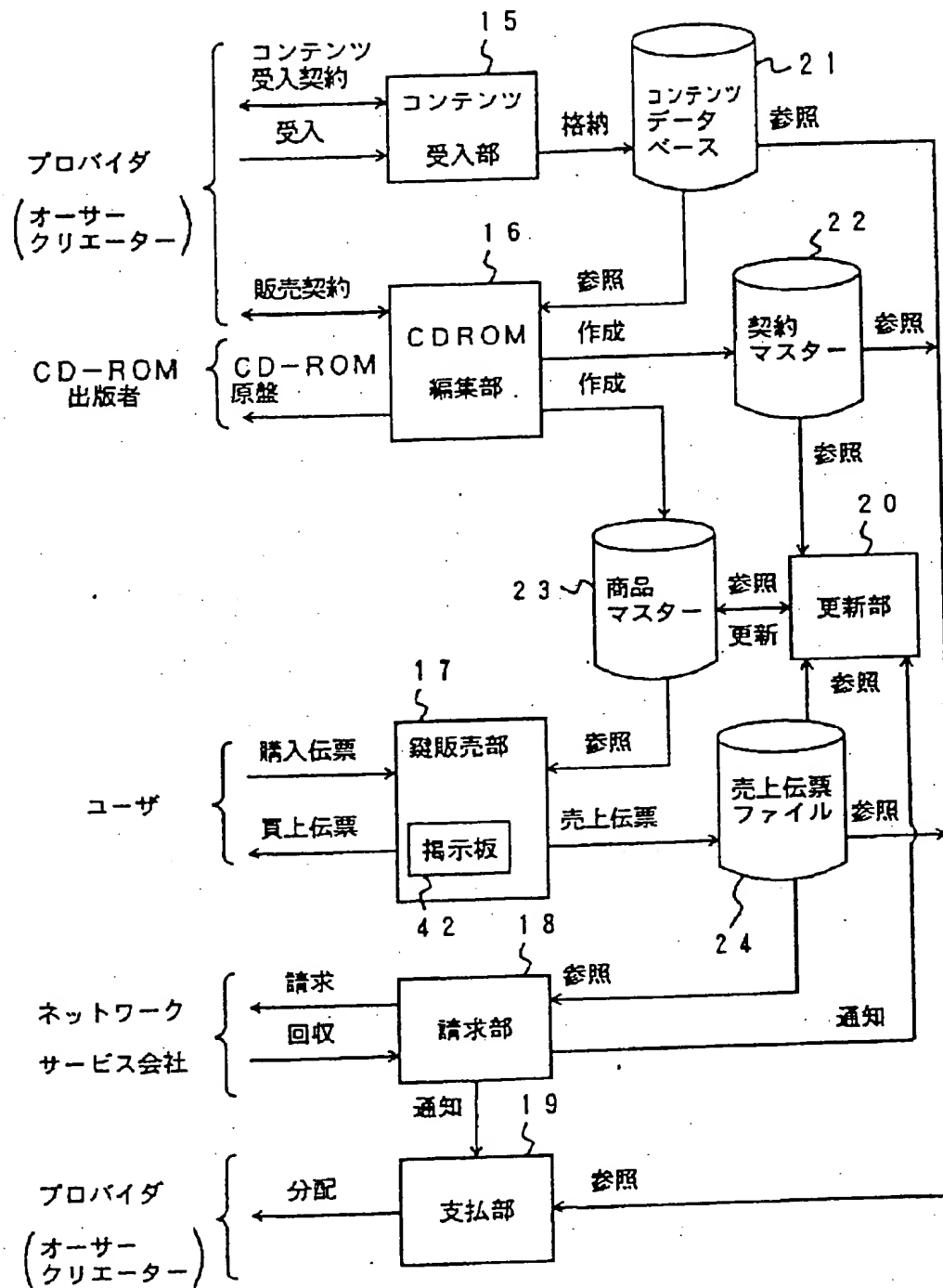
【図 1】



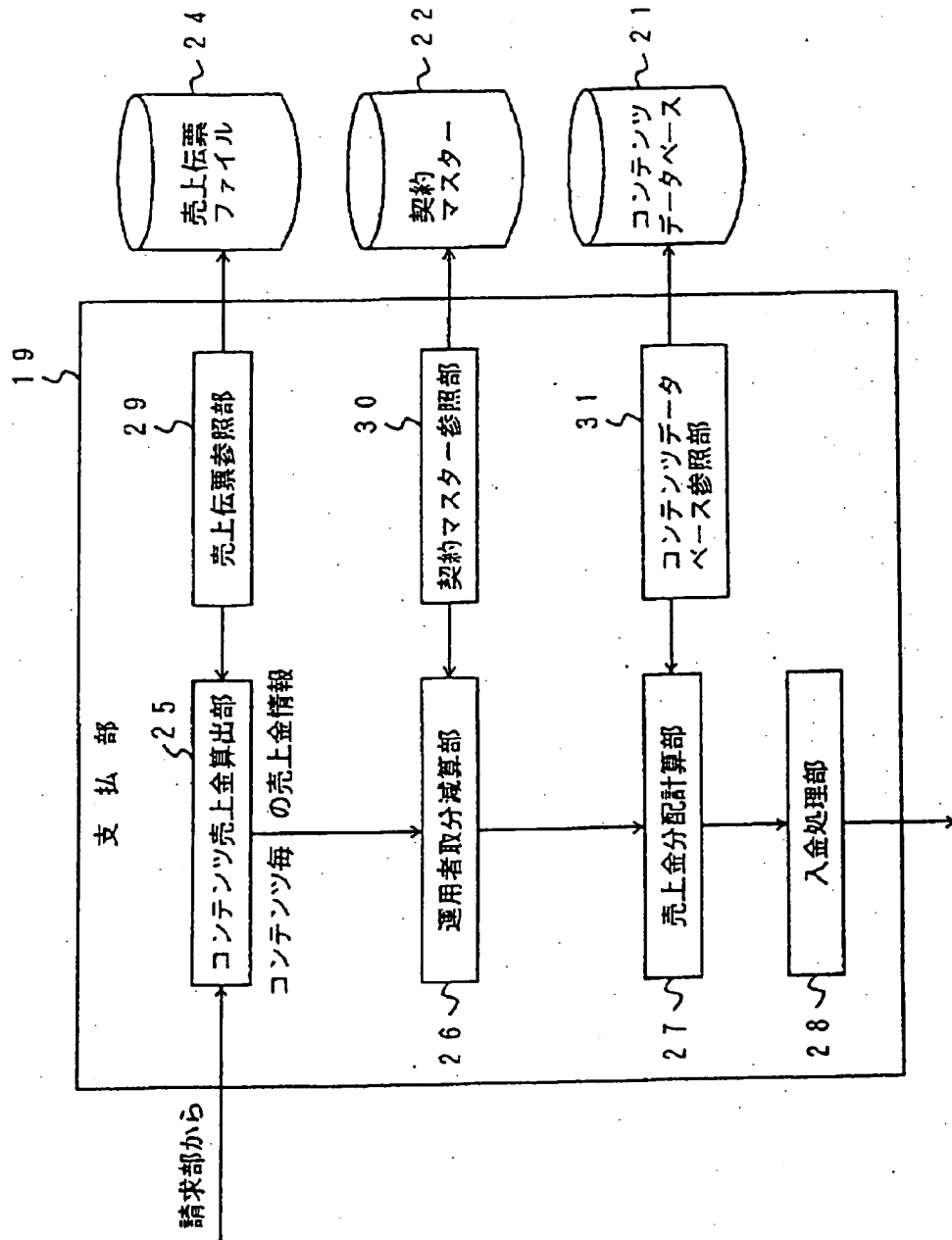
〔 図 2 〕



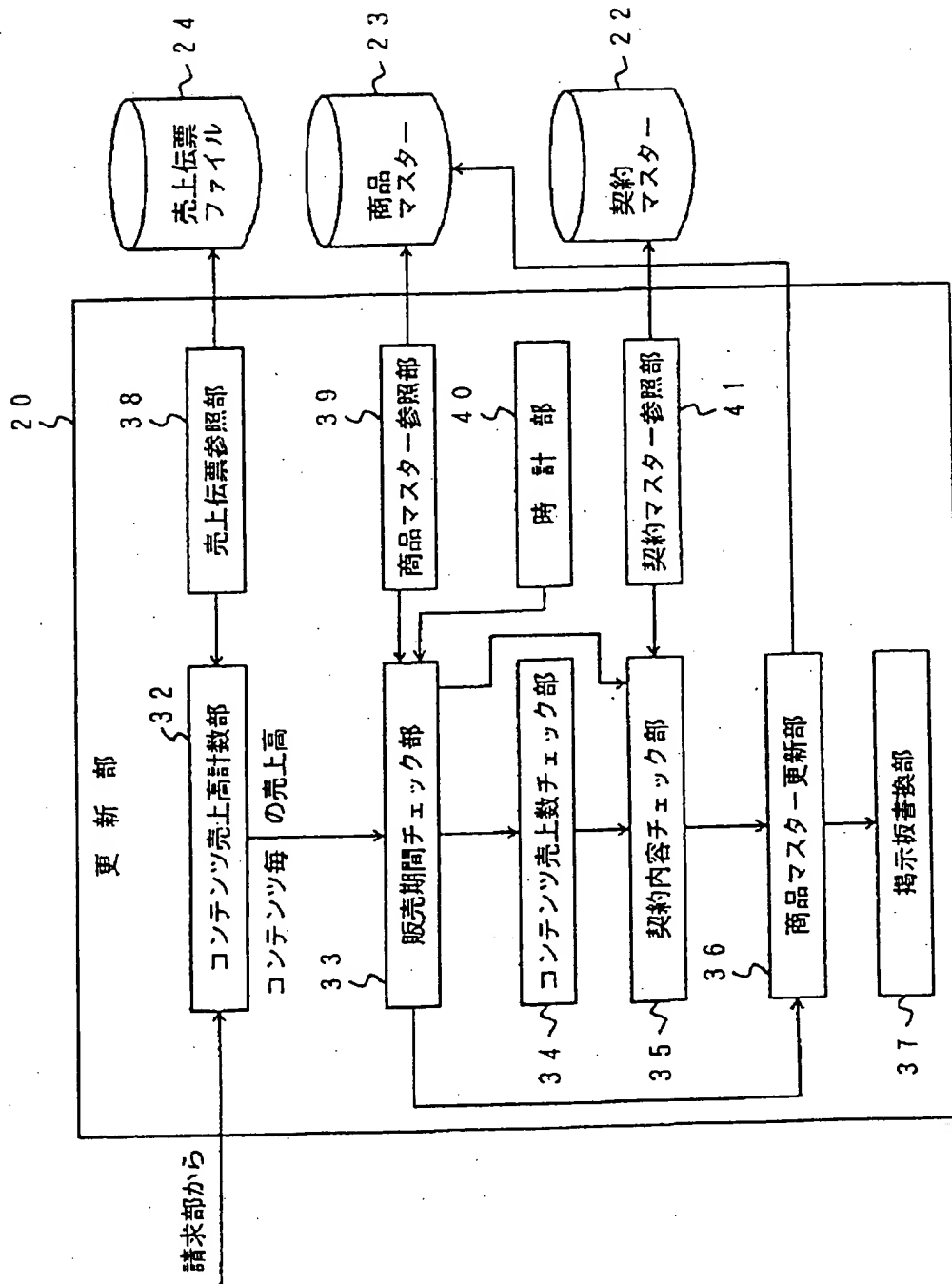
【図 3】



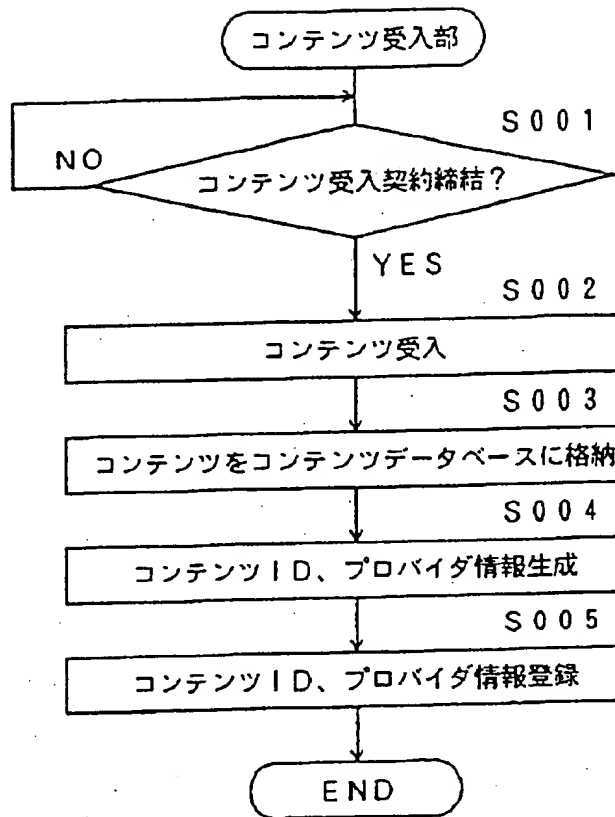
〔 図 4 〕



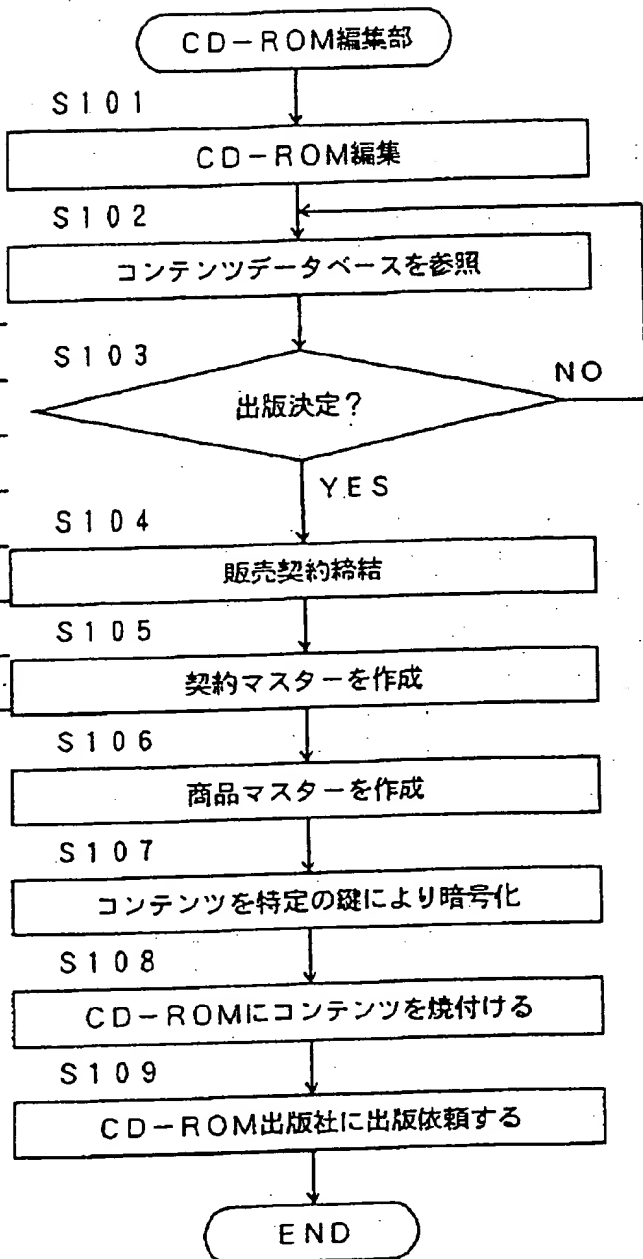
【 図 5 】



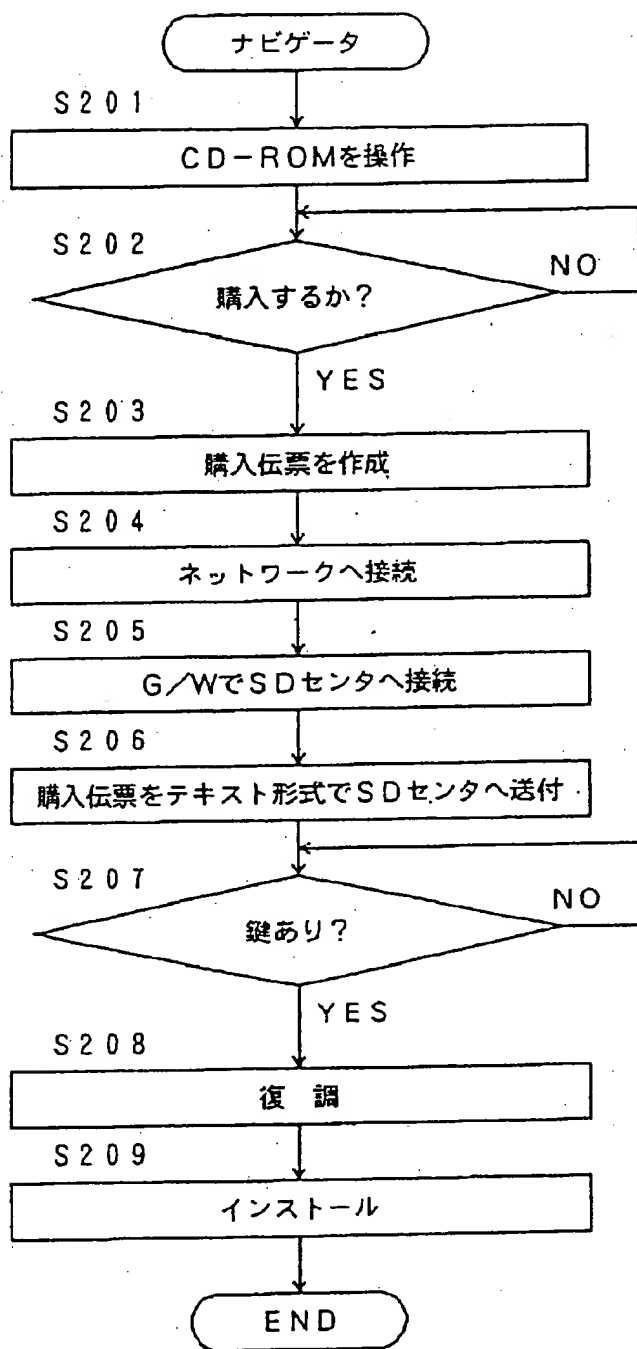
【図 6】



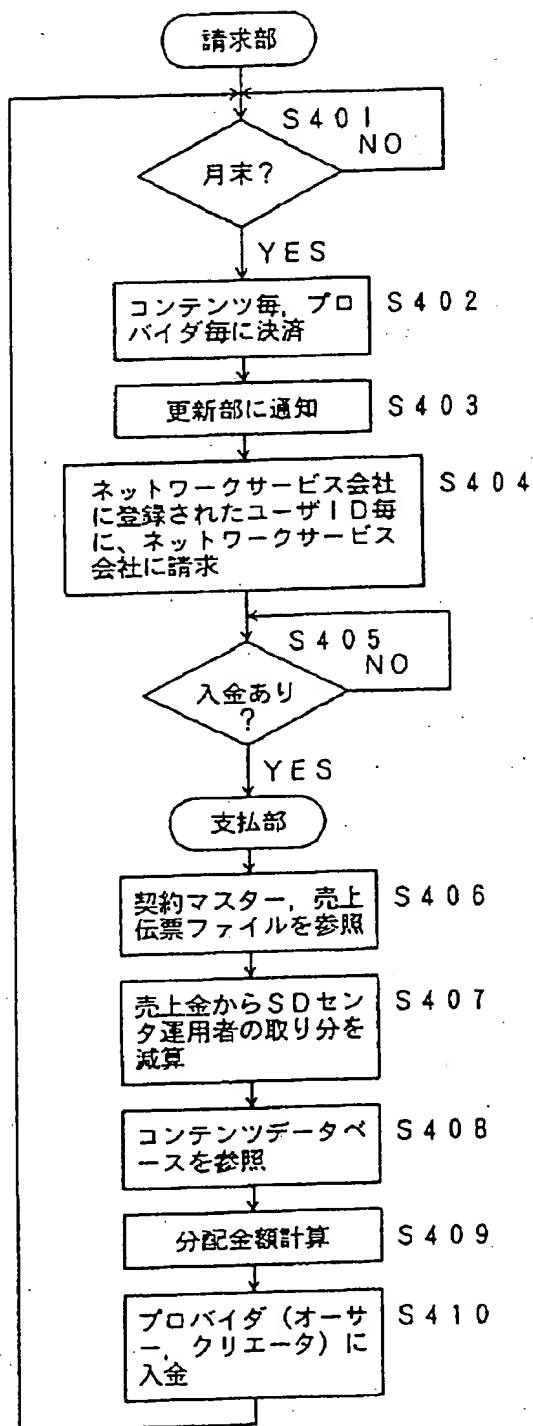
【図 7】



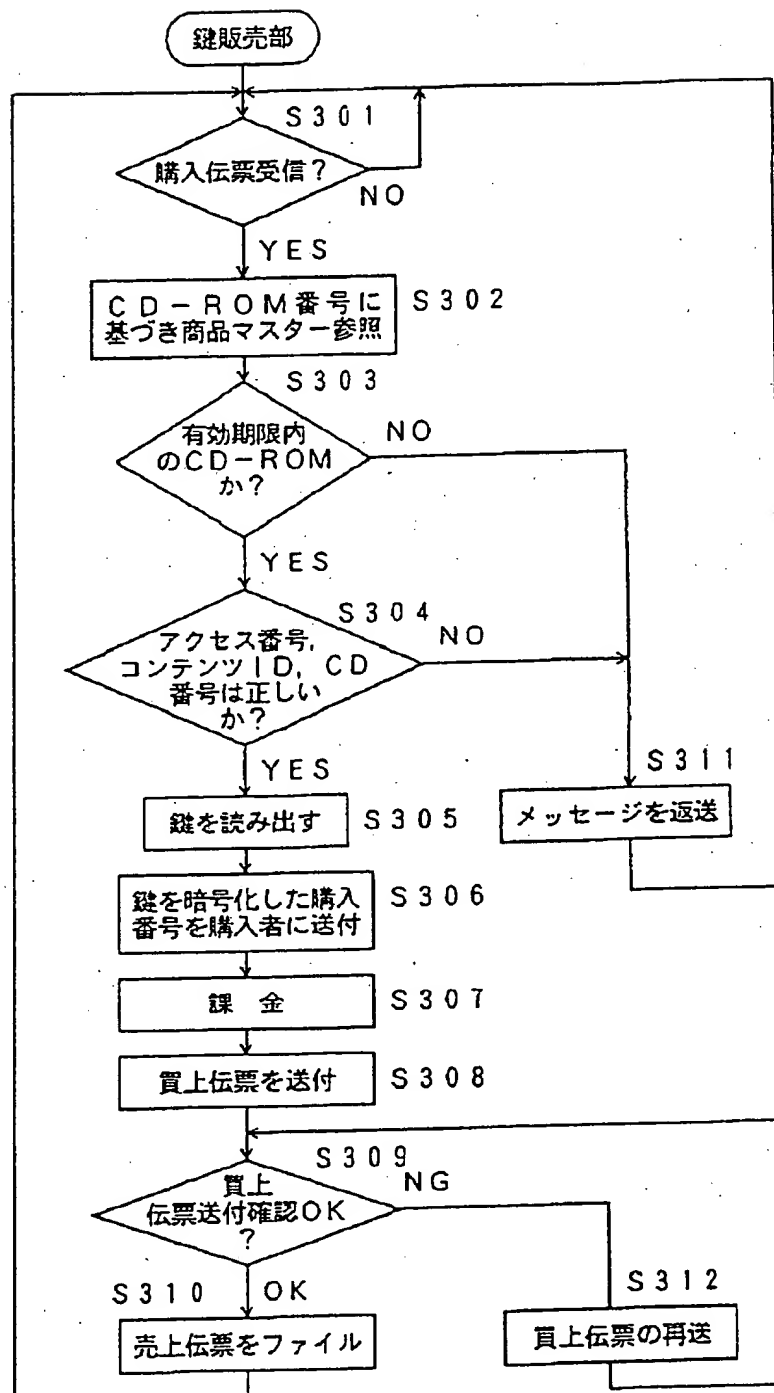
【図 8】



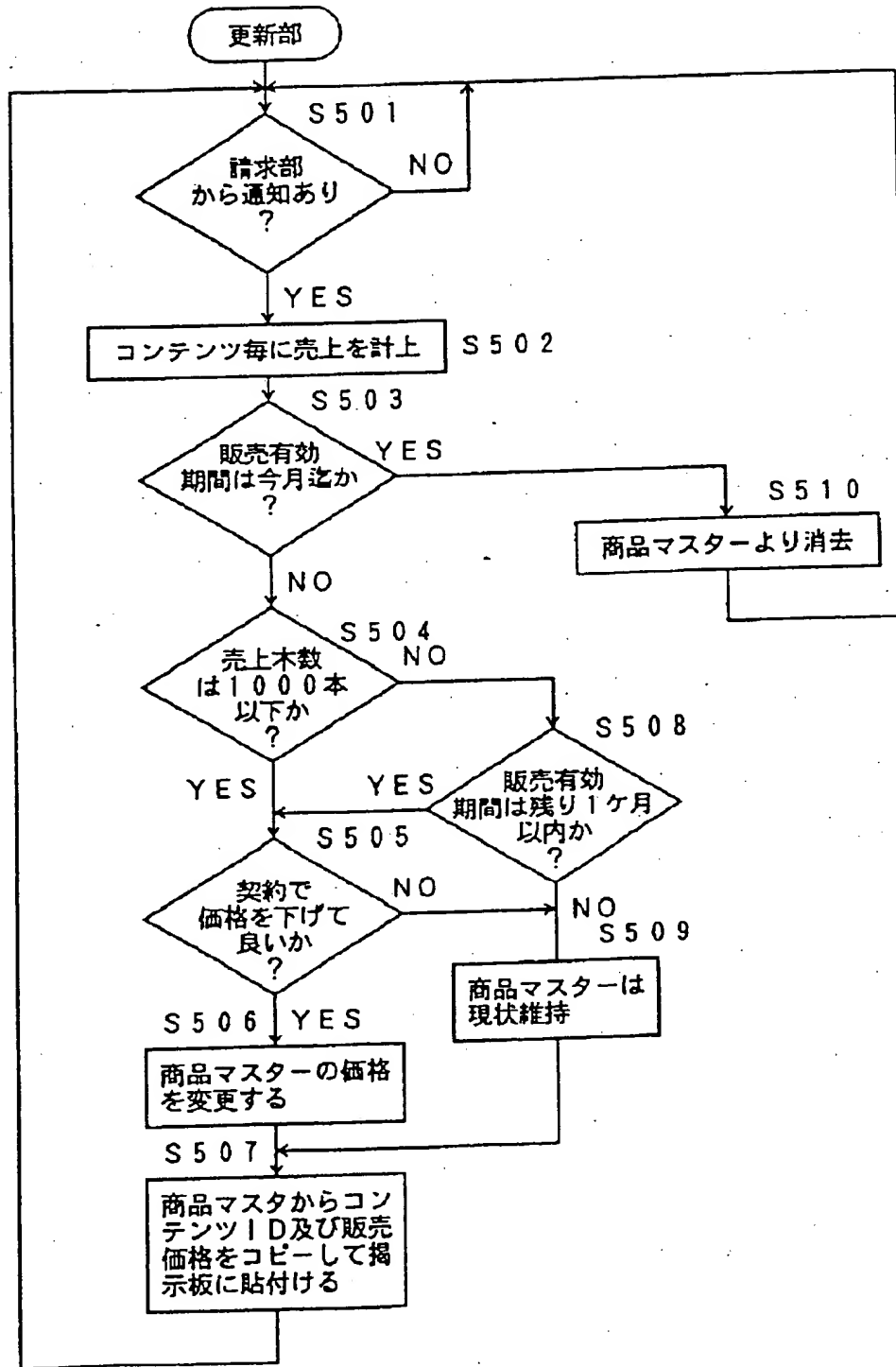
【図 10】



(図 9)



【 図 1 1 】



フロントページの続き

(72) 発明者 長谷川 和晴
 神奈川県川崎市中原区上小田中1015番

(72) 発明者 青江 秀史
 神奈川県川崎市中原区上小田中1015番
 青江 秀史 株式会社